AN

ACCOUNT

OF AN

EMBASSY

TO

THE KINGDOM OF AVA,

SENT BY THE

GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF INDIA,

IN THE YEAR 1795.

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CHAPTER XV.

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THE occurrences that took place in the interval between our arrival and the 30th of August, the day appointed for our formal introduction, were not of sufficient importance to require a minute relation. We enjoyed whatever personal convenience the country could supply; and I gladly embraced every opportunity to evince the most implicit confidence; which I am induced to think was productive of beneficial consequences. To my public character, as will appear in the sequel, the conduct of the Birman

court was punctilious and haughty, even to insufferable arrogance; but my accommodation and security as an individual were attended to with all the urbanity that could be expected from the most polished state of Europe.

Geography is the foundation of all historical knowledge, without which history becomes little better than romance. Having hitherto found the most authentic geographical information that I could obtain respecting countries eastward of the Ganges to be extremely erroneous, I was on that account more particularly desirous to determine the true situation of the capital of Ava; especially as I had now a favourable opportunity of profiting by the assistance of a gentleman of high professional talents. It seemed expedient, however, to obtain the sanction of

the Birman government, before I authorized Mr. Wood to commence astronomical observations; and, in reply to an application I made through the Maywoon of Pegue, I received the most liberal acquiescence; a compliment that was afterwards enhanced by a gracious message from his Birman Majesty, desiring to know, according to our calculation, the exact time when the expected eclipse of the moon was to take place, and, as it was partial, what portion of the lunar body would be in shade? Mr. Wood satisfied him in both particulars, and we were informed that the King, on comparing Mr. Wood's account with his own predictions (for he is said to be himself an adept in the science), discovered only a slight difference in the segment of the moon which was to be obscured. Mr. Wood's knowledge procured him con-

siderable respect among the better informed natives, but it excited the terror of the vulgar. Being obliged at night to leave the grove and go out on the plain, in order to have a distinct view of the heavenly bodies, the peasants that inhabited the neighbouring villages believed him to be a necromancer, and his telescope and time-keeper instruments of magic: in their wonder they sometimes crowded about him so as to disturb his operations; but it was nothing more than harmless curiosity; they wanted to discover by what means he held communication with the Natts, the supernatural and invisible agents of the air.

The river, which had now risen to its utmost height, had encroached so much on the grove, as to threaten a general inundation; and we began to think it not

improbable that we should be obliged some night hastily to change our residence from the house to the boats. The cause of the swelling of the waters was not apparent, as there had not fallen with us a sufficient quantity of rain to produce the smallest alteration in the body of the river: the Birmans, however, who knew the exact limit to which it would rise, laughed at our proposing to make arrangements for a sudden embarkation, and assured us that, within the memory of man, the floods had never surpassed a certain boundary.

Although, from the nature of the grounds in the neighbourhood of our dwelling, rice was the only grain that could be cultivated, we understood that on the other side of the lake, near the city, there were extensive fields of wheat,

which, from the samples brought to us, seemed to be equal in quality to the finest growth of England. The market price at Ummerapoora was one tackal, nearly half a crown, for a taindaung, or basket weighing about fifty-six pounds; but we had no occasion to purchase any, as the provision made by the commissary of government, and the presents from those who visited us, kept our store-room full. Every person who came brought something, either fruit, flowers, a plate of fine rice, of wheat, or some similar mark of respect. In return, I treated those of the higher order with tea and sweetmeats; of the former they were extremely fond; and I can truly say, that from ten in the morning until evening, the tea equipage was never unemployed. An old man who acted as commissary, and lived in the rhoom ad-

jacent to our dwelling, whose title was Kyewoon, brought all the females of his family to see us; they produced as their offering, fresh honeycombs hanging from branches of the bamboo tree; the honey was dropping from the boughs into pans. I was told that the bees were wild in the woods, and in such plenty that wax formed a staple article of commerce. The natives have a mode of gathering the honey without destroying the insect. The soldiers of the guard and our domestics continued to receive two tackal, at stated periods, in addition to their allowance of rice; and beetle-leaf was to be had fresh from gardens belonging to the adjacent villages. In one of these plantations, which very much resembled an English hop-garden, I saw a man watering his plants by means of a wheel, which raised water out of a

well from a considerable depth. The machine was constructed with much ingenuity.

The reputation that my Bengal draughtsman had acquired by his botanical drawings, performed under the inspection of Dr. Buchanan, having come to the knowledge of his Birman Majesty, or, in the Birman phrase, having reached the Golden Ears, the King was pleased to desire a specimen of his skill, and sent over a painting on glass, executed by a Siamese artist in his own service, signifying his royal will that it should be copied upon paper. This picture, which was a tolerable performance, represented the mode of catching wild elephants in the forests. It was thus described to me: the hunters, mounted on tame elephants that are trained to the business, by lying flat on

their backs, introduce themselves unnoticed into a wild herd, and take an opportunity to cast a running noose in the track of the one that is meant to be secured. The other end of the rope is fastened to the body of the tame elephant, who immediately throws the wild one down; a battle then ensues, in which the trained elephant, being assisted by its associates, soon overpowers the inhabitant of the woods, who is deserted by all the others; it is afterwards borne away a prisoner, fast bound to two of its captors, whilst another moves on at its head, and a fourth urges it behind. In a few weeks, by proper discipline, the animal becomes docile, and submits to its fate. Those that are taken in the manner delineated in the Plate, I was told, are for the most part females. Male elephants are usually enticed by the blandishments of the

females *, trained for the purpose, into an inclosure or Keddah, from whence they cannot extricate themselves, and are easily secured. My painter performed the task so much to his Majesty's satisfaction, that a request was made for his further services, in executing a drawing of a celebrated image of Gaudma, in which I willingly acquiesced. He was employed on it a week, and when it was finished, his Majesty condescended to express his approbation of the performance, which was certainly much superior to any thing that his own painter could produce.

* For a more ample description of the manner of catching wild elephants in Tipura, near the mountains that divide Bengal from the Birman dominions, see a Paper by John Corse, Esq. in the third Volume of the Asiatic Researches. The practice of Pegue differs somewhat from that of the Bengal hunters,

Among the articles of foreign trade which had found their way into the Birman country, nothing was held in higher estimation than the European glass-ware, imported into Rangoon from the British settlements in India. The art of vitrification has long been known and practised in most countries of the East; but no where can they make a pure transparent substance, like that which is brought from Europe. The Birman monarch, who is a great admirer of the manufacture, was particularly desirous to introduce it into his dominions; and supposing that every Englishman must be versed in the knowledge of making whatever comes from his own country, he sent a message to request that I would furnish his artificers with such instructions as might enable them to fabricate glass of a quality equal to what was made in England. Un-

luckily, none of us happened to be skilled in the mystery of a glass-house; all, therefore, that we could do, was to explain the principles of the art, which Dr. Buchanan obligingly undertook; and in order to facilitate the acquirement, and guide them in the practice, I lent them the Encyclopædia Britannica, and pointed out the article where the process is fully explained. Baba Sheen and the Armenian interpreter translated it into the Birman tongue; but I much fear that the theory alone, conveyed in terms of science, will not, without practical experience, advance them very far in an art which his Birman Majesty is so laudably solicitous to bring to perfection among his subjects.

It was a matter too remarkable to pass unnoticed, that of the numbers who did

me the honour of a visit, there was not one that had any share in the administration of public affairs, the Woondock that met me at Pegahm excepted, who, though of distinguished rank, is but an inferior minister: none of the Woongees or Attawoons condescended to pay me the compliment. The Maywoon of Pegue sometimes honoured me with his company: his official consequence, however, was here diminished into insignificance, notwithstanding he was of the highest order, except one, of nobility, wearing a tzaloe of nine strings.

When a public minister is delegated from a foreign power to the Birman court, it is the established custom for the Maywoon, or governor of the frontier province which the minister first enters, to provide for his safe conveyance to the

capital, and to attend to his convenience so long as he continues to reside in the country; a service which he is frequently obliged to perform in person, as in the present case of the English deputation. The governor of Bamoo, the province bordering on Yunan, performed the office to our Chinese neighbours with the utmost kindness and urbanity, and in his frequent visits to them took the opportunity of calling upon me. He was a sensible man, exceedingly courteous in his manner and address. He said that he had been twice to Pekin in the capacity of legate before he obtained his present station; and described the journey as very fatiguing, but, at the proper season, not at all perilous; he was upwards of three months in performing it. The road from the frontiers of the province of Bamoo until he penetrated far into Manchegee,

or Yunàn, lay through mountains: during the last thirty days he travelled in a boat on canals and rivers. He informed me that there were two languages spoken in China: one the Tirroup, or native Chinese; the other the Tarrait, or Tartar tongue: the latter is the language of the conquerors. The Birmans have not liberty to pass at will into the Chinese territory, nor the Chinese into that of the Birmans; but the Governor has power to grant passports. He gave me an impression of the Chop, or seal, which he was accustomed to affix to such papers, and likewise promised me a chart of his route to Pekin, which he afterwards presented to me. I had various occasions to acknowledge the attention and kindness of this truly well bred and intelligent man, who seemed to have profited from his travels, and to have overcome that af-

fected reserve which is the national characteristic of a Birman courtier.

On the 15th of August, the arrival of a messenger from Rangoon, sent by Captain Thomas, as the bearer of letters and newspapers that had been brought from Calcutta, diffused among us that satisfaction which they only who have been in remote countries, and long absent from their friends, can truly estimate; it was the first communication we had received since our departure from Bengal, and the situation of affairs in Europe was at that time extremely interesting.

In addition to the comfort we experienced from living at ease, and having every want liberally supplied, our gratitude was due to providence for the inestimable blessing of health, which we

enjoyed to a degree that fully evinced the salubrity of the climate; not a symptom of sickness, in a single instance excepted, had manifested itself among our people; but this was not the case with our Chinese neighbours: they were less fortunate; a dysentery, which had early attacked the senior member of the embassy, began to spread among his domestics; and, although they were not numerous, we heard of frequent deaths and of general illness among them. As no doubt could be entertained of the healthiness of the situation we were in, their malady was to be ascribed to some other cause than the atmosphere. The Governor of Bamoo, however, explained the matter very sensibly, by observing, that the sickness under which they alone laboured, entirely originated in their own indolence, and in the pernicious diet that they used.

The Chinese are said to be nationally great lovers of swine's flesh; and these personages possessed all the partiality of their country for that unclean animal; they had erected a pig-stye within the inclosure of their dwelling, where they fed pork for their own table, and, as a matter of compliment, sometimes sent a joint of the meat to me; but though it seemed to be good, we could not bring ourselves to use it. In addition to the ill effects of such gross food, they took no exercise, and drank immoderately of shouchow, a fiery and deleterious spirit. The Governor of Bamoo, who accounted for the cause of their ailment, condemned their sensuality, which, he said, he had in vain endeavoured to correct by advice and persuasion. At length the principal legate became so seriously ill that his life was judged to be in danger: the gover-

vernor, anxious for the preservation of a person whose safety was in some degree entrusted to his care, with a humanity that did him honour, applied to me for medical assistance. Dr. Buchanan willingly accompanied him to the sick man's chamber, and on examining his patient immediately perceived that the case was desperate. He was an emaciated old man, reduced by a disease of such long continuance as to leave no prospect of recovery: medicines, however, were administered, which, though they afforded but a temporary relief, raised a fallacious hope in the breast of the sufferer, who expressed the utmost anxiety to be able to attend on the day appointed for our public reception, at which time the Chinese deputies were likewise to be introduced: they had before been admitted to an informal audience of the King, when

the court was at Meengoung, soon after their first arrival, where his Majesty met them as though by chance. It is not usual for the King to receive public ministers ceremoniously, except in the metropolis.

As the time approached that was appointed for our public entry into Ummerapoora, which as yet we had only viewed from our residence on the opposite bank of the lake, I judged it proper to make some inquiry respecting the ceremonials usually observed on such occasions, and the exterior forms of homage that would be required. I wished also to ascertain the relative degree of rank that would be granted to the agent of the Governor-General of India; and as I was officially given to understand that the Chinese deputies were to be introduced on the same

day, I urged my right to precedence, on the thorough persuasion that they did not constitute an imperial embassy, but were merely a provincial legation, although probably sanctioned by the monarch of China.

The necessity of ascertaining these points became evident, from the scrupulous regard to external forms which the Birmans manifested upon every occasion. The Maywoon of Pegue being the channel of my official communication, I received through him, in reply to my first application, a general assurance of due attention, but an equivocal answer with respect to the Chinese. Repeating the requisition for satisfactory particulars, I was informed that I should be allowed parity of rank with the nobility of the court, and that precedence over the Chinese deputies

would be granted to me. With those assurances I remained satisfied.

On the 29th of August, the day preceding that of our formal introduction, I received a message, desiring to know what number of attendants I meant to take with me, and to specify the rank they bore, particularly that of the pundit, the moonshee, and painter. I was at the same time acquainted, that it was not customary to admit armed men into the palace, a form to which I readily assented. Late in the evening, another message was brought to inform me, that the profession of Dr. Buchanan was held by the Birmans in a less dignified estimation than it bore among us; and that it was unusual, on such solemn occasions, to receive a person of his station into the Lotoo, or great council hall. I took some pains to

vindicate the dignity of the liberal and enlightened profession of medicine, and explained to them, that there was no monarch of Europe who did not consider a physician as worthy to hold a place in the most distinguished ranks of society. This difficulty was at length conquered; they agreed to receive the Doctor, but stipulated that he should ride on horseback in the procession, and not be indulged with an elephant, a privilege which, they said, was granted only to persons of the highest consequence.

Preparatory to our visit, the presents intended for his Majesty were carefully assorted, and put into separate boxes: they were both handsome and costly, consisting of various kinds of European and Indian articles, such as mirrors, cut-glass, fire-arms, broad-cloths, embroidered mus-

lins, and Indian silks, all of the finest quality that could be procured; among other things there was a Shanscrit manuscript, superbly illumined, and written with beautiful minuteness; it was a copy of the Bagwaat Geeta, inclosed in a case of gold, and designed as a personal compliment from Sir John Shore, the Governor-General, to his Birman Majesty: there was also an electrical machine, of the effects of which some of the Birmans were not ignorant *. The boxes were covered with red satin, and fastened to poles, for the convenience of being carried on men's shoulders. Every matter was arranged on the day before the ceremony was to take place.

On the 30th of August we took an

* An electrifying machine had been introduced several years ago by a Frenchman.

early breakfast, and about eight o'clock a Sere-dogee, or secretary of the Lotoo, came to acquaint us that boats were prepared to convey us across the lake. Our domestics had received orders to hold themselves in readiness, dressed in the livery of the embassy, and the guard was paraded without arms. The presents having been sent before, we walked to the water side, attended by Baba-Sheen, the Sere-dogee, and several inferior officers: at the same time the two junior members of the Chinese mission, the senior being now at the point of death, came forth from the gate of their inclosure, attended by a retinue comparatively very small. We found three war-boats at the bank ready to receive us; these boats were sufficiently capacious for the number they were destined to contain: the largest was of fifty oars, but they

were not above one-third manned, probably with a view to our accommodation, as the vessels are so narrow that persons unaccustomed to them cannot sit between the rowers without inconvenience: it did not, however, escape our notice that they were quite plain, without either gilding or paint. We were about twenty minutes in rowing to the opposite side of the lake, and found a crowd of people collected near the water's edge to see us land. The place where we landed appeared to be nearly a mile, in a direct line, below the fort, the southern walls of which are washed by the lake when the waters are swollen. Three elephants and several horses were waiting to convey us, and some Birman officers of inferior consequence attended at the bank, dressed in their robes and caps of ceremony. The furniture of the animals we were to ride

was far from being superb. Men of rank in the Birman empire always guide their own elephants, and sit on the neck, in the same manner that the drivers or mohaats do in India: owing to this custom, they are unprovided with those commodious seats in which an Indian gentleman reposes at ease on the back of this noble beast, whilst the government of it is entrusted to another person. A large wicker basket, somewhat resembling the body of an open carriage, but smaller, without any elevated seat, and covered with carpets at the bottom, was fastened on the back of the elephant by means of iron chains that passed under his belly, and were prevented from chafing him by tanned ox-hides. This equipage was neither comfortable nor elegant; but as I had not learned how to manage an elephant, and ride between his ears, there was no alter-

native; I was obliged either to take what was provided, or submit to a less dignified conveyance. The drivers, instead of making the beast kneel down to receive his rider, as is the custom in other countries, drove him up to a temporary stage that had been erected for the purpose of mounting. Each of the Chinese deputies was also honoured with an elephant. Mr. Wood and Dr. Buchanan rode on handsome spirited horses, of the small Pegue breed, which had been prepared for them, and were equipped with much better furniture than was assigned to the elephants. The Birman saddles, however, not being well calculated for the ease of an European rider, two of English manufacture, which we had brought with us, were substituted in their stead. The moonshee, the pundit, and the painter, were likewise permitted to ride on horse-

back. After we had adjusted the ceremonial of mounting, the procession was marshalled in the following order:

A Sandohgaan, or master of the ceremonies, on horseback:

An Oniroupseree, or register of strangers, on horseback:

A Letzounseree, or register of presents, on horseback;

dressed in their official robes and caps.

Soldiers that composed the escort.

The elephant of the representative of the Governor-General.

Mr. Wood and Dr. Buchanan, on horseback.

Baba-Sheen, as chief interpreter.

The Chinese deputies, on elephants, preceded by their servants, bearing flags.

A Woondock, or second counsellor of state.

Two Terrezogees, or officers who hold judiciary stations.

The servants of the embassy walked on each side, two by two; and a number of constables attended, with long white rods, to keep off the populace.

The procession being thus arranged, we commenced our march, keeping a moderate pace, so as not to distress the bearers of the presents. After proceeding a short way, we entered a wide and handsome street that was paved with brick: the houses on each side were low, built of wood, and covered with tiles; they had been evidently prepared for the occasion, being fresh whitewashed, and decorated with boughs and flowers; the shops, which are usually open towards the street, displayed their best goods. In front of each house was a slight latticed railing of bamboo, advanced into the street, to the distance of three or four feet; over

this space was spread a shade of bamboo mats, that reached from the eaves of the houses to the railing, forming a sort of covered balcony, every one of which was crowded with spectators, men and women indiscriminately. Boys sat on the tops of the houses, and the streets were so thronged as to leave only a sufficient space for the procession to move without interruption; but what rendered the scene most remarkable was, the posture which the multitude preserved; every person, as soon as we came in sight, squatted on his hams, and continued in that attitude until we had passed by: this was an indication of high respect. Throughout the crowd there was no disturbance nor any extraordinary noise; the populace looked up and gazed in silence, nor did they attempt to follow us, but were satisfied with a transient view. The pagwaats, or

constables, armed with long rods, sometimes affected to strike those who were most forward, in order to make them recede; but in this act they humanely avoided hurting any one, generally directing the blow to the ground close to those whom they intended to remove. Thus we passed through several wide streets running in a straight direction, and often crossed by others at right angles. We perceived only two brick houses, and these we were informed belonged to foreigners. Contiguous to the fort was a small street, entirely occupied by the shops of silversmiths, who exhibited their wares in the open balcony, and displayed a great variety of Birman utensils in plate. The distance from the landing-place to this street we computed to be two miles. Immediately after, we crossed the ditch of the fort, which was

wide, deep, and faced with brick, but had little water in it: the passage was over a causeway formed on a mound of earth, in which there was a chasm of about ten feet to carry off the rain, and across this a strong bridge of planks was laid. Between the bridge and the foot of the wall, there was a space, eighty or a hundred feet wide, on which two redoubts were raised to defend the passage of the ditch; the rampart, faced by a wall of brick, was about twenty feet high, exclusive of the parapet, which had embrasures for cannon, and apertures for musquetry. Small demi-bastions projected at regular distances beyond the wall, but they did not appear to contain sufficient space to admit of heavy ordnance. The body of the rampart was composed of earth, sustained externally and within by strong walls; the gate was massive, with a wicket in it;

and the fort altogether, considered as an eastern fortification, was respectable, but insufficient to resist the approaches of an enemy skilled in the science of war. The Birmans, however, believe it to be impregnable; they put their trust in the height and solidity of their wall, which they conceive to be strong enough to resist all assaults, independent of the cover of a glacis, or any other advanced work than the ditch. I did not attempt to mortify their pride by telling them a disagreeable truth, that a battery of half a dozen cannon would, in a few hours, reduce their walls to a heap of ruins; and indeed if I had told them so, it is probable they might not have credited the information.

We entered by the western gate: there was little distinction between the houses

in the fort and those of the city, except that the dwellings of persons of official consequence, and the members of the royal family, who resided within the walls, were surrounded by a wooden partition that inclosed a court. We passed, making several angles in our way, through a market supplied with rice, pulse, and other vegetables, but saw neither meat nor fish. At the distance of two short streets from the palace, we came to a spot where bamboo stages were erected for us to alight, similar to those at the landing-place; here we dismounted, and walked in the same order as we had rode. Coming to the top of a short street leading down to the palace, we were desired by the Sandohgaan, or master of the ceremonies, through Baba-Sheen, to stop and make obeisance to the residence of majesty, by a gentle inclination of the

body, and raising the hand to the head, as they did; a desire with which I complied, although I conceived the distance so great as hardly to require that mark of respect. When we had proceeded two or three hundred yards farther, the Sandohgaan repeated the ceremony of bowing, to which I offered no objection; nor should I have felt the smallest reluctance in complying, had not the manner of the Sandohgaan been what I considered extremely disrespectful. Thus we proceeded, until we came to the rhoom, which was a lofty hall, raised four or five feet from the ground, and open on all sides; it was situated about a hundred yards from the gate of the palace court, on the left hand, and in the centre of a spacious area. Putting off our shoes we entered the saloon, and sat down on carpets that were spread for us, with our

faces towards the palace gate: here the presents were deposited, whilst the Chinese deputies took their places on the other side.

It was now about ten o'clock, and the woondock intimated that we must wait until all the princes of the royal family arrived, before it would be proper for us to enter: we had sat but a short time, when the Prince of Pegahm, the junior of the King's sons in point of rank though not in years, being born of a different mother, made his appearance. He was mounted on the neck of a very fine elephant, which he guided himself, sitting on a scarlet cloth embroidered with gold, whilst a servant behind, on the back of the animal, screened him from the sun with a gilded parasol. About fifty musqueteers led the way; these were fol-

lowed by a number of halberdiers, carrying spears with gilded shafts, and decorated with gold tassels. Six or eight officers of his household (each of the King's sons have a separate establishment) came next, dressed in velvet robes with embroidered caps, and chains of gold depending from the left shoulder to the right side; these immediately preceded the prince's elephant; another body of spearmen, with his palanquin of state, closed the procession. On entering the gate, he gave to one of his attendants a polished iron hook, with which he governed his elephant; as not any thing that can be used as a weapon is suffered to be brought within the precincts of the palace, not even by his Majesty's sons. The prince's escort halted without the gate, and the greater number of his attendants were stopped, those only being

admitted who were of higher rank, together with the men who carried his large beetle-box of gold, and his flaggon of water, which are brought rather for state than for refreshment. When the prince had alighted, his elephant returned, and all the attendants ranged themselves in the area between the rhoom and the palace gate. Soon after the Prince of Pegahm had entered, the Prince of Tongho, the next in precedence, appeared; he was attended by a suite nearly similar to that of his brother; and in succession came the princes of Bassein and of Prome: the Engy Teekien, or heir apparent, came last; when he arrived it was twelve o'clock, which the great drum that proclaims the hours sounded from a lofty tower near the palace. The state in which the latter personage made his public entrance was highly superb,

and becoming his elevated station. He was preceded by a numerous body guard of infantry, consisting of four or five hundred men, armed with musquets, who marched in regular files, and were uniformly clothed and accoutred. Next came a party of Cassay troopers, habited in their fanciful dress, with high conical caps bending backwards. We were told that through respect they had alighted from their horses nearly at the same place where we had dismounted. Twenty or thirty men followed these, holding long gilded wands; then came eighteen or twenty military officers of rank, with gilded helmets; next, the civil officers of his household and his council, wearing the tzaloe, or chain of nobility, and arrayed in their robes and caps of state, varied according to their respective ranks. The Prince, borne on men's shoulders,

in a very rich palanquin, but without any canopy, followed; he was screened from the sun by a large gilded fan, supported by a nobleman; and on each side of his palanquin walked six Cassay astrologers, of the Braminical sect, dressed in white gowns and white caps studded with stars of gold; close behind, his servants carried his water-flaggon, and a gold beetle-box, of a size which appeared to be no inconsiderable load for a man. Several elephants and led horses with rich housings came after; some inferior officers, and a body of spearmen, with three companies of musqueteers, one clothed in blue, another in green, and a third in red, concluded the procession.

In every part of this ostentatious parade perfect regularity was maintained, which considerably increased the effect. All

things seemed to have been carefully predisposed and properly arranged. If it was less splendid than imperial Delhi in the days of Mogul magnificence, it was far more decorous than any court of Hindostan at the present day. The rabble was not tumultuous, the attendants and soldiery were silent, and every man seemed to know his own place. No noisy heralds, as is the custom in India, ran before, vociferating titles, and overturning people in their way. The display of this day was solemn and dignified, and I doubt much whether, in any other capital, such multitudes could be brought together with so little confusion; as, besides the attendants and the military, there were many thousands of spectators.

Our delay in the rhoom had now been protracted to two hours, a circumstance

which, though it gratified our curiosity with a novel and most interesting spectacle, yet could not be considered as a mark of respect, especially as we had not the company of any person of distinguished rank, the junior Woondock excepted, who stayed with us but a very short time. The attendance of the Maywoon of Pegue was, according to the usage of the country, on this occasion our undoubted right; and the example of the viceroy of Bamoo, who paid that compliment to the Chinese deputies, placed the omission in a more striking point of view, whilst the singular character of the people put it out of my power to attribute the neglect to chance or to casual inadvertency.

A few minutes after the Engy Teekien, or Prince Royal, had entered, we received

a summons, in compliance with which we proceeded from the rhoom, observing the same order as before; the presents carried in front, and the members of the Chinese embassy following the English deputation. As we proceeded, the Sandohgaan was exceedingly troublesome, by calling on us to make frequent superfluous obeisances, whilst his manner of requiring them was conspicuously uncivil. I checked his insolence by observing, through Baba-Sheen, that if he wished me to proceed, he must alter his tone and demeanour. This reproof, however, had only a momentary effect; he soon resumed his arrogant behaviour, which he repeated throughout the day whenever opportunity offered.

On approaching the gate, the greater part of our attendants were stopped, and

not permitted to follow us; and we were desired to put off our shoes, with which we immediately complied.

The area we now entered was spacious, and contained the Lotoo, or grand hall of consultation and of audience, where the Woongees meet in council, and where affairs of state are discussed and determined. Within this inclosure there is an inner court, separated by a brick wall, which comprehends the palace, and all the buildings annexed to the royal residence. Within the gate a troop of tumblers were performing their feats, while dancing girls were exhibiting their graces in the open air, and on the bare ground, to the sound of no very harmonious music. We were next ushered up a flight of stairs into a very noble saloon, or open hall, called the Lotoo, where the

court was assembled in all the pomp that Birman grandeur could display. On entering this hall, a stranger cannot fail to be surprised at the magnificence of its appearance; it is supported by seventy-seven pillars, disposed in eleven rows, each consisting of seven. The space between the pillars I judged to be about twelve feet, except the central row, which was probably two feet wider. The roof of the building is composed of distinct stages, the highest in the centre. The row of pillars that supported the middle, or most lofty roof, we judged to be thirty-five or forty feet in height; the others gradually diminish as they approach the extremities of the building, and those which sustain the balcony are not more than twelve or fourteen feet. At the farther part of the hall there is a high gilded lattice, extending quite across

the building, and in the centre of the lattice is a gilded door, which, when opened, displays the throne; this door is elevated five or six feet from the floor, so that the throne must be ascended by means of steps at the back, which are not visible, nor is the seat of the throne to be seen, except when the King comes in person to the Lotoo. At the bottom of the lattice there is a gilt balustrade, three or four feet high, in which the umbrellas and several other insignia of state were deposited. The royal colour is white, and the umbrellas were made of silk of that colour, richly bespangled with gold. Within this magnificent saloon were seated, on their inverted legs, all the princes and the principal nobility of the Birman empire, each person in the place appropriated to his particular rank and station: proximity to the throne is, of

course, the most honourable situation; and this station was occupied by the princes of the blood, the Woongees, the Attawoons, and other great officers of state. The Engy Teekien (or heir apparent) sat on a small stool, about six inches high; the other princes on fine mats. The space between the central pillars that front the throne, is always left vacant, for this curious reason, that his Majesty's eyes may not be obliged to behold those whom he does not mean to honour with a look. The place allotted for us was next to this unoccupied part, but we afterwards discovered that the Chinese deputies had taken possession of those seats which, according to the etiquette that had been agreed upon, the English gentlemen were to have occupied. So trivial a circumstance would not have merited attention, had it not been followed by circumstances

which left no room to suppose, that any act relating to external forms was either accidental or unpremeditated on the part of those who regulated the ceremonials.

After we had taken possession of mats that had been spread for us, it was civilly intimated, that we ought not to protrude the soles of our feet towards the seat of majesty, but should endeavour to sit in the posture that was observed by those around us. With this desire we would readily have complied, if it had been in our power, but we had not yet learned to sit upon our own legs: the flexibility of muscles which the Birmans, and indeed all the natives of India, possess, is such as cannot be acquired by Europeans. A Birman, when he sits, seldom touches the seat with his posteriors, but is supported by his heels. It is scarcely prac-

ticable for an European, dressed in close garments, to place himself in such an attitude: and if he were able, it would be out of his power to continue long in it. We inverted our legs as much as possible, and the awkwardness with which we did this excited a smile from some; not a word, however, was uttered, and our endeavours, I thought, seemed to give satisfaction. In a few minutes eight Bramins, dressed in white sacerdotal gowns, and silk caps of the same colour, studded with gold, assembled round the foot of the throne, within the balustrade, and recited a long prayer in not unpleasing recitative; this ceremony lasted a quarter of an hour. When they had withdrawn, the letter from the Governor-General which I delivered to a Woondock, was placed on a silver tray in front of the railing, and a Sandohgaan, or reader, ad-

vanced into the vacant space, and made three prostrations, touching the ground each time with his forehead; he then read, or rather chanted, in a loud voice, what I understood was a Birman translation of the letter. When this was done, the reader repeated his prostrations, and next proclaimed a list of the presents for the King. These several readings being finished, he repeated his obeisances and retired: after an interval of a few minutes, an officer, entitled Nakhaangee, advanced, and proposed a question to me, as if from his Majesty; on receiving my answer he withdrew, as it might be supposed to communicate the reply; and returned in an adequate time to ask another: thus he put three separate questions to me, which were as follows: "You come from a distant country; how long is it since you arrived? How

were the King, Queen, and Royal Family of England, when the last accounts came from thence? Was England at peace or war with other nations? and was your country in a state of disturbance?"

The latter question alone contained more than words of compliment and ceremony, and coming in such a solemn manner, required a clear and determinate answer on my part, I replied in the Persian language—"That Great Britain was at enmity with France; that the continent of Europe was the seat of war; but that the kingdom of England enjoyed perfect tranquillity, which it was not probable would be disturbed." This interrogation seemed to indicate, that the Birmans had received impressions of our situation in Europe from no very favour-

able quarter; and I had afterwards occasion to know, that the unremitting and restless industry of French propagators had pervaded even this remote region; and that though, in such a country, they dare not avow their equalizing principles, they left no art unpractised, through the means of their emissaries, to insinuate doubts, excite fears, and create distrust of the English.

These were all the questions that were proposed; neither the Chinese nor any other person being interrogated. In a few minutes after my last reply had been conveyed, a very handsome desert was brought in, and set before us; it consisted of a variety of sweetmeats, as well China as Birman; læpack, or pickled tea-leaf, and beetle, formed part of the entertainment, which was served up in

silver, china, and glass-ware: there appeared to be not less than a hundred different small dishes: we tasted of a few, and found some of them very palatable; but none of the courtiers partook, or moved from their places. About half an hour had elapsed, when we were informed by the Sandohgaan that there was no occasion for us to remain any longer. The non-appearance of his Majesty was a considerable disappointment, as I had been taught to expect that he would have received the Governor-General's letter in person: it was not, however, until some time afterwards, that I was made acquainted with the true reason of his absence.

When we rose to leave the Lotoo, the Sandohgaan desired us to make three obeisances to the throne, by a slight inclination of the body and raising the

right hand to the head; we were then reconducted to the saloon, where we were informed it was necessary we should remain until the princes came forth from the palace, and had got upon their elephants, as their etiquette did not allow any person, on such occasions, to mount before the members of the royal family; we accordingly took our places in this hall as before: shortly afterwards the court broke up with as much form and parade as it had assembled.

The ceremony of departure differed from that of entrance: the Engy Teekien came out first, who went in last; next followed the other members of the royal family in rotation, and after them came the Chobwaas, or petty tributary princes: these are personages who, before the Birmans had extended their conquests over the

vast territory they now possess, had held small independent sovereignties, which they were able to maintain so long as the balance of power continued doubtful between the Birmans, Peguers, and Siamese; but the decided success that has attended the Birman arms since the accession of the present family, having deprived them of their independence, their countries are now reduced to subordinate provinces of the Birman empire. As many of their governors as confidence could be placed in, and who were willing to take the oath of allegiance to their conquerors, were continued in the management of their former possessions, and are obliged to make an annual visit to the capital, to pay homage in person at the golden feet. The moderation, as well as the policy of this measure, is said to have fully answered the ends that were proposed.

As soon as the royal family had departed, we returned to the place where we had left our elephants, and proceeded home; with this difference, that the Chinese deputies, who had followed us to the palace, preceded us in our return; a circumstance which, in addition to several others, gave me cause to attribute want of ingenuousness to those who had the management of the ceremonials. My claim of precedence had been unconditionally stipulated and admitted; a precedence, which the certainty that the Chinese deputies constituted only a provincial mission of very inferior consideration, gave me an undoubted title to demand.

With a people less attentive to punctilio, or less regardful of the privileges and external indications of rank, I should certainly not have considered it necessary

to controvert matters of no intrinsic moment in themselves, but which, when intended to produce an effect on the minds of those who can only judge from appearances, become, to a person in a public capacity, of real importance. Every occurrence of this day, and every object that presented itself, evinced the previous care that had been bestowed on the minutest points of etiquette: the utmost splendour of the court had been displayed on the occasion; and I was credibly informed, that the non-appearance of his Majesty was neither customary when a foreign minister from a sovereign state was to be introduced, nor owing to any accidental prevention: but that it was a matter predetermined, in order to afford a pretext for spreading abroad that the representative of the English nation had delivered his dispatches,

and rendered tribute (for so they denominated the presents), without being honoured by an interview of their King. These apparent indications of arrogance, which were not diminished by the unworthy artifice of making me believe that his Majesty was to have received in person the letter from the Governor-General, as coming from a sovereign and an equal power, gave me reasonable grounds to be dissatisfied with the manner in which the ceremonials had been conducted, and made me suspect the real light in which it was the wish of the court that I should be considered. As nothing degrading to my public character, however, had yet been avowed, I refrained from any formal declaration of my sentiments till subsequent circumstances confirmed my conjectures, and rendered an explanation unavoidable.

We did not arrive at our dwelling in the grove till past three o'clock. In our way home the spectators were few, in comparison with the numbers collected to gaze at us when we went. The day had been oppressively hot; we were nevertheless highly gratified by the scene we had beheld, which was uncommonly splendid, and in every respect suited to the dignity of an imperial court. The evening, however, proved cool; and refreshing breezes recompensed us for the sultriness of the day, the transactions of which supplied an interesting topic of conversation until the hour of repose.

CHAPTER XVI.

Presents expected by the principal Officers—of trivial value—Matter of Form.—Visit the Engy Teekien—Conduct of the public Officers more respectful.—Splendour of the Court.—Engy Teekien—Ceremony at departing.—Chobwas, or tributary Princes.—Meedaw Praw—a Princess of high Dignity—her Court—venerable Person—Curiosity—Politeness.—Visit to the Princes of Prome—of Bassien—of Tongho—and of Pegahm—Reception at their respective Courts.—View the Piedigaut Tiek, or Royal Library.—Noises renewed by the Chinese.—Effects of Despotism.—Pride of the Ministers.—Insurmountable Difficulty in a Point of Etiquette.—Politeness of the Governor of Bamoo.—Visit to the Seredaw Poundagee Praw, or Arch Priest.—Magnificent Kioum.—Numerous religious

Buildings.—Knebang Kioum—a beautiful Building—to what Purpose applied.—A Kioum of extraordinary Splendour.—Visit the Arracan Gaudma—enthusiastic Adoration of the Multitude.—Chounda, or Place of Accommodation for Strangers.—Partake of Refreshment.—Return.—Description of the Fort of Ummerapoora.

THE next morning, August 31st, the Shawbunder of Rangoon, and Baba-Sheen, waited on us with information, that as our formal introduction was now past, I might command elephants and horses to go wheresoever I pleased; and that they had received an order to attend, and to shew me whatever was most worthy the notice of a stranger. They intimated also, that the Engy Teekien, or heir apparent, was to hold a court on the following day for the purpose of our introduction, and that our attendance

would be expected about the hour of noon. These instructions they had received from the Maywoon of Pegue; to whom I wrote in reply, that as the stipulated formalities, which had been agreed to by all parties, had been infringed on the preceding day, it became necessary, before I could accept of the prince's invitation, to receive a positive assurance that they would be better observed on this occasion. I likewise represented the conduct of the Sandohgaan as obviously disrespectful, and hoped that he would not be allowed to officiate again on our introduction; but, above all, I desired to be explicitly informed, whether or not the Engy Teekien purposed to appear in person, without which I could not possibly think of attending his court.

To this letter I received a civil reply,

in the Persian language, assuring me that some part of what to me seemed objectionable, originated in mistake; that the Sandohgaan should he confined for his improper conduct; and that the prince intended to receive me in person: these assurances, coming from such a quarter, were perfectly satisfactory.

Since my arrival I had been apprised of a circumstance, of which I was before unaware, that it was customary for a person in a public capacity to present something of the manufacture of his country, or some rarity, to each member of the royal family to whom he is introduced; it was likewise usual, though not indispensably necessary, to pay the same compliment to the chief ministers and the principal officers of the court. This present, being no more than a piece or two

of muslin, or silk, was too trifling to be regarded by the individuals for its value: it was, nevertheless, expected, and the omission would be considered as unhandsome: in addition, therefore, to the things that I had brought with me, I gave directions to purchase such articles, of European and Indian manufacture, as were most esteemed, and could be procured; these I allotted agreeably to the instructions of Baba-Sheen and the Shawbunder, who were so good as to acquaint me with the established forms, and the proportion to be presented to each person.

At nine o'clock on the first of September we crossed the river, nearly with the same attendance as on the former day. In consequence of an application I had made to the Maywoon of Pegue, elephants were now provided for Mr. Wood and

Dr. Buchanan. This was a circumstance which neither the gentlemen themselves nor I should have deemed of sufficient importance to deserve any attention, had not the junior members of the Chinese embassy been supplied with them; but as these people paid such strict attention to the minutest article expressive of relative rank, I did not think it right that the gentlemen with me should be considered in a degree inferior to the subordinate members of a provincial delegation, of which, an acquiescence in a less dignified mode of conveyance than the Chinese were allowed, would, on my part, have been a tacit admission.

We proceeded through the city by the route we pursued before, with the presents carried in front, and observing the same order of procession. Many of the houses

were decorated with flower-pots and garlands, but the spectators were by no means so numerous as when we made our first entrance. We dismounted at the top of a street within a few hundred yards of the surrounding wall of the prince's palace, where stages had been erected for our convenience; from thence we were conducted to the Rhoom, which was situated a little to the right hand of the principal gate; there was another building of a similar kind opposite to us, which we were informed was used only for trials, and the transaction of public business; but the one that we occupied, was appropriated to ceremony and state. In the formalities of this day, a much more respectful demeanour was preserved towards us, than on the former occasion, and we sat in the Rhoom with better company. Two Woondocks, the master

of the elephants, and some other officers bearing emblems of rank, attended us; another Sandohgaan also officiated in the ceremonials, and behaved very differently from the person whose manners had been so offensive, and whom I did not observe at court on this day. This conduct fully compensated for the former incivility, though perhaps the Sandohgaan did not receive any severe reprehension for what he had done.

The King of the Birmans, who seems to have a parental fondness for all his children, is said to be particularly attached to the Engy Teekien, or eldest prince; and with a liberal policy has granted him a share in the government almost equal to what he himself exercises. The establishment of the heir apparent is becoming his high station and future ex-

pectations; and his Woon, or chief minister, stands among the foremost of the Birman nobles in reputation for wisdom and integrity.

There was little in the etiquette of this day different from that of the visit to his Majesty: we waited in the Rhoom until all the younger princes had arrived, which they did, as before, in rotation, beginning with the junior. The members of the royal family went within the gate, before they alighted from their elephants and palanquins; but the ministers and the nobility dismounted on the outside, and proceeded on foot. After each person had entered, the gate was immediately closed, and opened as soon as another visitant presented himself. When we advanced to the gate, we expected it would have been instantly thrown open

to admit us; a delay, however, occurred, which at first I was inclined to attribute to some accidental circumstance: but after I had waited some minutes under a burning sun, finding that there was an unnecessary and apparently a studied protraction, I turned round and walked towards the Rhoom; on this the door was immediately opened, and the interior court, on the right hand of the gate, as we entered, displayed several men dancing in masquerade, and on the left was a band of musicians, and a set of dancing girls without masks. A little farther on, were two handsome houses; one of masonry, with doors and windows closely resembling Gothic structure, flat roofed, and of a peculiar, but far from inelegant, construction; the other was of wood. We were conducted to the latter, and ascended into a capacious saloon, open on

three sides. Here we found the court assembled, nearly in the same manner as at the Lotoo. The hall consisted of six rows of pillars, seven in each row; but there was neither gilding nor paint bestowed upon them, such ornaments being strictly confined to the sovereign and the priesthood. The naked pillars gave a very rude appearance to the apartment, which was disadvantageously contrasted with the brilliant dresses of the courtiers. We occupied the same relative position to the rest of the assembly as at the Lotoo, with this difference, that the gentlemen of the English mission had the place assigned to them, which the Chinese deputies, either through mistake, or design, possessed on the former day. At one end of the saloon, against a wainscot, stood the prince's sofa of state, covered with embroidered cloth, and on each side

were ranged several utensils of gold of a very large size; such as his beetle-box, cup, spitting-pot, and water-flaggon: above the sofa there was a window in the wainscot, six or eight feet from the ground, with folding shutters, that were closed when we entered the hall. Soon after we had taken our seats, four Bramins dressed in white sacerdotal garments, chanted a prayer that lasted a quarter of an hour; their devotions being finished, the window before mentioned suddenly opened, and discovered the Engy Teekien seated behind it. The courtiers immediately bent their bodies, and sat in a crouching attitude, with their hands joined: the English gentlemen joined their hands like the rest of the company. The prince seemed to be about twenty-eight or thirty years of age, of an open countenance, and rather inclined to corpulency;

but of his person we could not judge, as his head and shoulders only were visible. His habit, as much as could be seen of it, shone with gold, and he wore on his head a pyramidical cap, that glistened exceedingly, but of its real richness we could not form any estimate, being at too great a distance. A list of the presents were then recited in a loud voice by a reader kneeling in front of the sofa; after which total silence prevailed throughout the assembly: not a word was spoken by the prince; he noticed no one, but sat erect and motionless, without appearing to look either to the right or the left. About a quarter of an hour elapsed in this dumb interview, when on a sudden, by some agency invisible to us, the window-shutters were closed, and we saw him no more.

A very handsome dessert was then

served up, on dishes spread on gilded trays. We tasted of several things, and, when the repast was ended, returned to the Rhoom, in which we remained until the royal family passed by. As much form was observed this day, as when the court assembled at the Lotoo; and the demonstrations of respect manifested towards the Engy Teekien, as well by his brothers as by inferior subjects, fell little short of what is offered to the sovereign himself, a circumstance that strikingly evinces the wisdom and policy of the government. The Chobwas, or petty princes, who followed the royal family, were on this day very numerous: we were told, that there were altogether fifty-six Chobwas dependent on the Birman state; if this be true, their territories must be very inconsiderable. On the present occasion the Governor of Ba-

moo walked amongst them in procession, from which we concluded that he was a temporary regent; a station to which the King occasionally appoints Birman officers, when the hereditary prince of the country happens to be a minor, or incapable of the administration of public affairs.

The mother of the principal Queen, named Medaw Praw, has already been mentioned as a princess of high dignity, venerable for her years, and illustrious from the affinity that she bears to the royal family; her sister had been the wife of the famous Alompra, the deliverer of his country; and, her daughter being espoused to the reigning monarch, she stands in the double relation of aunt and mother-in-law to the King. I had been apprized, that a visit to this lady would

be an acceptable mark of respect to his Majesty; and as the rank she bore gave her precedence over all the sons of the King, except the heir apparent, it was proper that I should wait upon her before I paid my respects to the junior princes. I gladly embraced the opportunity which this offer gave me, to attend the drawing-room of an Asiatic princess, and promised myself much gratification from a sight so uncommon among the jealous nations of the East. When the ceremony at the palace of the Engy Teekien had ended, it was not more than two o'clock, and there was yet sufficient time to wait upon the Medaw Praw, who, we were informed, had made preparations to receive us. Mounting our elephants, we went in form to attend her, and found her possessed of a very handsome mansion in the neighbourhood of the imperial pa-

lace; it was situated in the centre of a court, surrounded by a palisade, at the gate of which there was a stage erected for our convenience in alighting. We entered the inclosure without any of the parade observed in our former visits: at the bottom of the stairs we put off our shoes, and ascended into a handsome hall, supported by several lofty pillars; at the farther end a portion of the floor was elevated six or eight inches, and separated by a neat balustrade from the rest of the room; within this space, under a white canopy, was placed a large cushion of blue velvet fringed with gold, on a carpet covered with muslin. There was a numerous assemblage of both sexes, but particularly women, sitting round the balustrade. As soon as we entered, a space was immediately vacated for us to occupy, in front of the door and opposite to the cushion.

After we had been seated a few minutes, the old lady came forth from an inner apartment, and walked slowly towards the elevated seat, supported by two female servants, whilst another held up her train; her long white hair hung loose upon her shoulders, but she wore neither covering nor ornament upon her head. Her dress, which was extremely fine, without being gaudy, became her advanced years and high dignity; it consisted of a long robe of white muslin, and over her shoulders was thrown a sash of gauze, embroidered with sprigs of gold. She advanced to where the cushion was placed, and took her seat on the carpet, supporting her head on her arm that rested on the pillow, whilst the two female attendants, neatly dressed, kneeling, one on each side, fanned her with long gilded fans. Every person seemed to pay

her profound respect, and when she entered, both men and women bent their bodies in the attitude of submission. I had brought, as a token of my veneration, a string of pearl and some fine muslin. The Sandohgaan announced the offering, and enumerated the articles with a loud voice, entreating, in my name, her gracious acceptance of them. She looked at the English gentlemen with earnestness, but seemed entirely to disregard the Chinese, although their dress was much more showy than ours: her manner was on this occasion extremely complaisant, and she asked several questions, such as, what were our names? how we were in health? what were our ages? On being informed, she obligingly said she would pray that we might attain as great a longevity as herself; adding, that she had reached her seventy-second year. I did not perceive,

amongst the numerous company that attended, any of the junior princes, or of the principal ministers, although there were several personages of distinction. After she had retired, a very handsome dessert was served up: the fruits and preserves were delicious: whatever China could yield, was united with the produce of their own country. Having tasted of various dishes, we withdrew without any ceremony; and as none of the royal family were present, there was no necessity to delay our departure: we accordingly returned home, a good deal oppressed by the heat of the weather, and wearied by the repetition of tedious formalities.

On the two following days we visited the princes of Prome, of Bassien, of Tongho, and of Pegahm, titles taken from

the provinces over which they respectively preside. These brothers are not all by the same mother: the prince of Prome alone being full brother to the Engy Teekien, or heir apparent. In the course of our visits we had a better opportunity than before of viewing the streets and buildings, the former of which were invariably laid out in strait lines, crossing each other at right angles. The houses in general differed little from those of Rangoon; they were all covered with tiles, and on the ridge of the roofs was a long range of earthen pots, filled with water, in readiness to be broken in case of fire: the few houses of brick and mortar which we saw were said to belong to the members of the royal family. Rows of trees were planted in several streets, five or six feet in front of the houses, forming a shady walk for foot

passengers. As the younger princes do not assume the state of royalty, our reception was much more gay and les ceremonious at their palaces, than at that of the Engy Teekien. At the palace of the prince of Prome, or, as he is termed, the Pee Teekien, the preparations made for our entertainment were extremely splendid. When the gate of the inclosure was thrown open to admit us, we were surprised with a view of a lane of elephants on one side, and of horses on the other; there were fifteen of the former, some of which surpassed in size and beauty any I had ever seen: the horses were more numerous, and several of them very richly caparisoned. Passing through these, we came to an open space, where rope-dancers and tumblers were performing in the open air. We stopp d to look at them, but observed nothing re-

markable in their feats; they were much inferior in agility to the tumblers of Southern India. One man, however, surprised us a good deal, by applying the point of a spear to his shoulder and resting the other end against a pillar, thus pushing on it, apparently with great force, until he bent and broke a thick shaft; this he effected without piercing his own skin, which, though the spear was not very sharp, must have been wonderfully firm to have resisted such evident violence.

While we were viewing the sports, a message was brought from the prince, to acquaint us that these people had been procured for our amusement, and that after we had satisfied our curiosity he would be glad to see us. We immediately proceeded to the hall of reception, which was a handsome wooden building,

but not so large as that of the elder brother. At the upper end there was a sofa, curiously gilded, and decorated with pieces of mirror, disposed in such a manner as to produce a pleasing effect. None of the royal family were present, and we did not observe any of the Woongees or Attawoons. A few minutes after we had taken our seats, the prince entered, splendidly dressed; he proceeded to his sofa with much solemnity, and spoke only a few words. We were, as usual, entertained with a handsome dessert, of which the prince himself solicited us to eat. As soon as he withdrew, our attention was called to a select company of figure-dancers, who had commenced their performance in the virando, or balcony of the hall. This band of females did not at all discredit the festival of a prince; three of the number were beautiful, and

moved with graceful ease, in perfect harmony to the music: their outer dress was a flowing robe made of transparent gauze delicately embroidered with flowers of gold and silver, and a profusion of gold chains encircled their necks and arms. We remained a quarter of an hour beholding this elegant spectacle, and then returned to the place where our elephants were waiting. The prince of Prome is in person rather above the middle size; his age does not exceed twenty-seven or twenty-eight years; and, like his elder brother, his appearance promises future corpulency: his countenance is naturally cheerful and pleasing, which we were told was the true index of his mind: he bears an excellent character, and is said to be much esteemed in the province over which he immediately presides.

Our next visit was to the prince of Tongho, by whom we were received with every mark of attention. His dwelling was much inferior to those of his elder brothers, and the attendance was comparatively small; there were, however, a number of state elephants paraded in the court-yard, and we passed through a line of musqueteers, drawn up in single files on each side. This military array had a very singular appearance; hardly any two were dressed alike, and some of them were without any other clothing, than a fillet that encircled their head, and a cloth rolled round their waist: through respect, they were all seated on their heels, some with their firelocks shouldered, and others with the butts resting on the ground. Here also we found tumblers, musicians, and dancers; and there were two carriages in waiting, handsomely gilded, with

a pair of horses harnessed to each: these vehicles were of a light construction, on four wheels, open at the sides, and covered with a convex canopy. The prince sat on a gilded chair; he was a slender man, and appeared to be older than the prince of Prome, whom he is said not to resemble in any particular. The power which this prince possesses must be considerable, as his government, formerly the independent kingdom of Tongho, is rich, extensive, and populous; and the fort of Tongho is, at the present day, deemed the strongest in the empire. Persons of rank, we observed, were here permitted to introduce their beetle-boxes and spitting-pots, which was not the case at any of the other courts. Our visit being concluded, we returned home. The heat during the early part of this day had been very intense; but a refreshing shower

towards evening cooled the air, and rendered the night pleasant. We were not surprised, when we came back, to learn that the senior of the Chinese embassy had died during our absence, as he had been so ill in the morning that his colleagues declined taking a share in the ceremonials of the day.

On the following day, at the customary hour, we crossed the lake, and proceeded with the same attendants as before to the house of the prince of Bassien. His dwelling was very handsome, and the pillars of his hall, which the law prohibits him either to gild or paint, were covered with flowered satin. Many men of rank graced the assembly, and some who wore high military insignia; but none of the royal family or the principal ministers were present. The prince seemed a very

awkward, bashful youth, about seventeen years of age. The situation of his government, which extends along the sea coast as far south as Cape Negrais, gives him the power either to obstruct or assist, in a material degree, the merchants who trade to Bassien; and ships being sometimes obliged to take shelter in the Negrais river, during the adverse monsoon, his people have frequent opportunities of affording aid to the distressed. After sitting some minutes, and finding he was not inclined to begin a discourse, I broke through the general silence, by addressing him in a complimentary manner, expressing acknowledgment of the kindness which had been extended by the officers of his government to British merchants and mariners, as well as my reliance on his future influence in their favour. I spoke in the language of Hindostan, and

each sentence was translated by Baba-Sheen. The prince was embarrassed; he twice attempted to reply, but had not the power; two of his courtiers crept towards him, and, in a prostrate attitude near the foot of his seat, suggested what they conceived he ought to say: their aid, however, was ineffectual; his Highness could not utter a connected sentence. At length his Woon, or chief minister, relieved him, by making an apposite reply in his name. Our entertainment was nearly the same as at the houses of the other princes. From hence we went to the palace of the junior prince, entitled Pegahm Teekien; a title derived from the ancient city of that name, which is the seat of his government. He seemed livelier than his brother whom we had just left, and his Woon was a very venerable personage. On this occasion, the

repast differed in one particular from any we had yet received; a roast fowl was introduced, no doubt in compliment to us; and as their religion does not forbid them to eat meat, but only prohibits the slaughter of animals for the purposes of food, there was no crime in the act of serving it up to us, or partaking of it themselves: the only question was, how the bird came to be deprived of life? to which, no doubt, an exculpatory answer could have been given. This, however, was a matter which it did not become us to discuss; it was certainly a handsome and liberal testimony of their desire to provide what they thought would be agreeable to their guests.

In addition to the band of dancing girls that performed here for our amusement, there were two comedians, who recited

passages, and exhibited various distortions of countenance; but they were far inferior to the inimitable performer we had seen at Pegue.

Having finished our introductory visits to the different members of the royal family, we had now leisure to gratify curiosity, by viewing whatever the capital contained, that was most deserving the notice of strangers. The day not being far advanced, we walked from the palace of the prince of Pegahm, to see the Piedigaut Tiek, or royal library: it is situated at the north-west angle of the fort, in the centre of a court paved with broad flags, and close to a very handsome Kioum, or monastery. Before we entered the library we ascended the Kioum, and found the inside correspond with the external appearance; the building was spa-

cious and richly gilded; the pillars, the ceiling, and the pannels were entirely covered with gold leaf; and the image of Gaudma shone with brilliant lustre. A balustrade of wood, minutely and beautifully carved, protected the image from intruders. On the pannels of the walls, were represented figures of inferior agents of the divinity, and of prostrate Rhahaans in the act of devotion: these were all shaped in fret-work in the wood, and were of no contemptible workmanship; a well wrought foliage of the same bordered the pannels. The image of Gaudma, in this Kioum, was large, and made of marble; it was seated on a broad pedestal, entirely gilded; in front of which, within the balustrade, stood a handsome girandole of cut glass, of European manufacture: near the image, was a gilded couch, which, we were informed, was

the customary bed of the principal Rhahaan, or head of all the Birman priesthood, when he chose to pass the night in the fort, which rarely happened. It was splendidly gilt; the bottom, however, was only a bare board: pillows were not wanting; for there were two, but they were made of wood. A mat spread on the floor is the highest luxury of repose in which the Rhahaans indulge.

From the Kioum we proceeded to visit the adjacent library; it is a large brick building, raised on a terrace, and covered by a roof of very compound structure. It consists of one square room, with an enclosed virando, or gallery, surrounding it: this room was locked, and as we had not brought a special order for seeing it, the person who had the care of the library said that he was not at liberty to open

the doors, but assured us that there was nothing in the inside different from what we might see in the virando, where a number of large chests, curiously ornamented with gilding and japan, were ranged in regular order, against the wall. I counted fifty, but there were many more, probably not less than a hundred. The books were regularly classed, and the contents of each chest were written in gold letters on the lid. The librarian opened two, and shewed me some very beautiful writing on thin leaves of ivory, the margins of which were ornamented with flowers of gold, neatly executed. I saw also some books written in the ancient Palli, the religious text. Every thing seemed to be arranged with perfect regularity, and I was informed that there were books upon divers subjects; more on divinity than on any other; but history,

music, medicine, painting, and romance, had their separate treatises. The volumes were disposed under distinct heads, regularly numbered; and if all the other chests were as well filled as those that were submitted to our inspection, it is not improbable, that his Birman majesty may possess a more numerous library than any potentate from the banks of the Danube to the borders of China.

It was late when we returned home, and our repose was disturbed by a renewal of the noises which the Chinese were accustomed to make; they sounded all night on loud gongs, the funeral knell of the departed embassador, uttering at intervals horrible cries and lamentations. One of the mourners imitated with his voice the howling of a dog, so naturally that all the curs belonging to the boat

people and the Cassay huts in our neighbourhood joined in the chorus. Our proximity to these personages proved to us a source of great molestation.

About this time a ludicrous circumstance happened, which only deserves notice, as it tends to illustrate the character of the people, and shews to what an abject state despotic tyranny can debase the human mind. The Engy Teekien, or prince royal, took a pleasure in collecting foreign beasts; among others, he had procured male goats from almost every country of the east. A flock of these, consisting of more than thirty, were sent to feed on the borders of the lake, near our dwelling: we happened to have three or four she-goats, that had been brought from Bengal for the sake of their milk. Allured by the bleat of the females, the

whole flock of males one night broke through the paling, and made a forcible irruption into our court: the suddenness of the attack, at such an hour, surprised us not a little; I got up, and ordered the Birman guards that were posted at the gates, to drive them away, which they attempted to do by shouting at them, but without any effect, as the animals, some of which were very large, had now become furious, and after fighting with each other, began to rush through our houses. I then desired the Birmans to make use of sticks, but this they positively refused, saying that the goats were "praws," or lords, meaning that they were ennobled by belonging to the Prince, and that no person dared, on any account, offer injury to them: having no other alternative, we armed our servants and the soldiers with large bamboos, who sub-

dued these troublesome invaders, though not without much difficulty, and some risk, whilst the Birmans lifted up their hands and eyes in astonishment at our temerity: the praws, however, were severely beaten. Having at length got rid of them, I returned to rest, and heard no more of the matter.

The intense heat of the three days spent in the formalities of visiting the princes, made me postpone any further ceremonials until the 6th of the month (September), which day was appointed to pay our respects to the Seredaw Poundagee Praw, or the arch priest of the Birman empire: in the intermediate time a difference of opinion arose in regard to the etiquette of compliments, in which I did not think myself at liberty to depart from what I

considered an attention due to my public character.

The grand ruling council of the Birman nation has already been described as consisting of four chief members entitled Woongees, and four junior members, called Woondocks, between whom there is a wide disparity of rank. The place of third Woongee was vacant, and the junior bears very small comparative importance with the two seniors, who, in fact, govern the empire. These personages, whose power is so great, possess a corresponding degree of pride; the governors of provinces are in their esteem men of little consequence, and are often treated by these ministers with excessive arrogance, which is not solely confined to those whose situation and expectations place them in a state of dependence, but is in-

discriminately extended to all; nor could I hope to be exempted from receiving a share in common with others. I was informed, that after paying my respects to the royal family and the Seredaw, it was expected that I should wait on the two senior Woongees, and offer them in person the customary presents. I observed in answer, that I had no objection to paying these ministers a mark of attention by the trifling present which usage had established; but to wait on them at their houses, unless I received an assurance that my visit would be returned, was a ceremony I begged leave to decline. This intimation I imagine was rather a disappointment to them, as much pains were taken to induce me to alter my resolution. I however refused to concede, but I offered to meet them at the house of the Maywoon of Pegue, a proposal from

which they dissented, remarking, that to visit me would be more eligible than to go to the Maywoon's house. I replied, that our formalities were not less strict than theirs, and that I could no more relinquish my claim to the respect due to my public station, than they could descend from their elevation; and I saw no remedy unless they themselves chose to apply that which was in their own power, and which they must be sensible I had a right to require. Finding that I was not inclined to yield, they requested, if I could not visit them in person, that I would allow the other gentlemen to pay them the compliment; a desire to which I readily acceded, as well from a wish to open a channel of communication, as to manifest on my part a conciliatory disposition. Mr. Wood and Doctor Buchanan obligingly made no objection; I therefore an-

swered that the gentlemen would wait on them, and expressed my regret that I was deprived of the same pleasure.

During this interval of rest the Governor of Bamoo frequently favoured me with a visit, his business bringing him almost daily to the residence of the Chinese. By his desire, I sent them compliments of condolence, with a piece of coarse white muslin, which, it seems, is the etiquette on such occasions. On one of these days the Bamoo Governor brought with him the chart of his journey to Pekin, as he had formerly promised; it was delineated in a curious manner on a sort of black paper commonly used by the Birmans, on which they write with a pencil made of steatite, or soap-stone. The places were distinctly marked; but not having any scale, the measurement was extremely

confused, and so disproportionate that it was impossible to judge of distances with any degree of precision. We could however trace his progress through the Chinese dominions in the Jesuits map that is prefixed to Du Halde's account of China.

On the day appointed for our visit to the Seredaw, we took boat at seven in the morning, and, attended by our usual retinue, crossed the lake; one of the surviving Chinese also accompanied us.—Baba-Sheen, the Shawbunder of Rangoon, and some Birman officers, met us on the opposite bank, where our elephants were waiting. When we approached the causeway or bridge, instead of crossing it we turned to the left and proceeded close to the ditch, parallel with the west face of the fort, till we came to the north-west angle. At this place the river ap-

proaches so near to the walls as to render a continuation of the ditch impracticable; we then went along the north side, passing on our left a handsome kioum crowned with a gilded piasath or spire, which we were told had been erected by Meedaw Praw, the venerable lady whom we had visited. On arriving at the north-east corner, we observed at some distance on the plain another religious edifice of distinguished splendor, dignified by the title of Kioumdogee, or royal convent, where, we were informed, the Seredaw or chief priest intended to receive us, and not at his usual residence, which was at a Kioum about two miles farther. The articles I designed to present to him having been sent forward to his customary abode, we were obliged to wait in an adjoining house until they could be brought back. Being prepared,

we were conducted into a spacious court surrounded by a high brick wall, in the centre of which stood the kioum, an edifice not less extraordinary from the style of its architecture, than magnificent from its ornaments, and from the gold that was profusely bestowed on every part. It was composed entirely of wood, and the roofs, rising one above another in five distinct stories, diminished in size as they advanced in height, each roof being surrounded by a cornice curiously carved and richly gilded. The body of the building, elevated twelve feet from the ground, was supported on large timbers driven into the earth after the manner of piles, of which there were probably 150 to sustain the immense weight of the superstructure. On ascending the stairs we were not less pleased than surprised at the splendid appearance which the inside dis-

played; a gilded balustrade, fantastically carved into various shapes and figures, encompassed the outside of the platform. Within this there was a wide gallery that comprehended the entire circuit of the building, in which many devotees were stretched prostrate on the floor.—An inner railing opened into a noble hall, supported by colonnades of lofty pillars; the centre row was at least fifty feet high, and gilded from the summit to within four feet of the base, which was lackered red. In the middle of the hall there was a gilded partition of open latticed work, fifteen or twenty feet high, which divided it into two parts, from north to south. The space between the pillars varied from twelve to sixteen feet, and the number, including those that supported the galleries, appeared to be not fewer than one hundred, which, as they approached the

extremities, diminished in height; the outermost row not exceeding fifteen feet.—The bottom of these was cased with sheet lead, as a defence against the weather.—A marble image of Gaudma, gilded, and sitting on a golden throne, was placed in the centre of the partition; and in front of the idol, leaning against one of the pillars, we beheld the Seredaw sitting on a satin carpet. He was encompassed by a circle of Rhahaans, from whom he could be no other ways distinguished, than by his preserving an erect position; whilst the others bent their bodies in an attitude of respect, with their hands joined in a supplicating manner. On entering the hall, the Birmans and the Chinese who accompanied us prostrated themselves before the figure of Gaudma, after which they kneeled down and made their reverence to the Seredaw, touching the ground

with their foreheads, whilst we took our seats on fine mats, that were spread at a little distance from him. He received us with much politeness, and in his looks and demeanour affected more liveliness and complaisance than any of the fraternity I had hitherto seen. His appearance denoted him to be about forty years of age; not meagre and austere as they generally are, but fat and jocular. I presented to him my offering, which consisted of a piece of yellow cloth, the sacerdotal colour; some sandal wood, and a few wax candles covered with gold leaf. He asked several questions respecting England, such as how long the voyage usually was from thence to India: being told this, he observed that we were an extraordinary people to wander so far from home. I noticed the magnificence of the kioum: he replied, that such sub-

lunary matters did not attract his attention; he was on earth but as a hermit. I desired his prayers; he said they were daily offered up for the happiness of all mankind, but that he would recommend us to the particular protection of Gaudma. He made some observations on our appearance, which I did not understand, and he even smiled; a relaxation very unusual in a Rhahaan. We retired without ceremony, and, mounting our elephants, proceeded along a wide road leading to the northward, which soon brought us to an extensive plain, that seemcd to stretch in an uninterrupted level to the foot of a range of mountains ten or twelve miles distant. The soil was a poor clay, and the pasturage indifferent. We saw at a distance some fields of grain, and understood that capacious reservoirs had been constructed with great labour and

expence, by order of the king, in the vicinity of the mountains, which enabled the inhabitants of the low countries to water the grounds, and render the earth productive in a season of drought. Several kioums and villages were scattered over the plain; but when we had advanced about two miles, religious edifices increased, beyond our power to calculate the number. The first that we entered was called Knebang Kioum, or the Kioum of Immortality, from the centre of which rose a royal piasath, to the height of a hundred and fifty feet: the roofs were of the customary complicated structure, one above another. This was the place where the embalmed bodies of deceased Seredaws are laid in state: the building rested on a terrace of brick, and was not elevated on pillars, as Kioums and dwelling-houses usually are. The hall was very

handsome, about seventy feet square, surrounded by a wide gallery: the roof was sustained by thirty-six gilded pillars, the central forty feet in height. Mats were spread in different parts for the repose of the Rhahaans, and on each was placed a hard pillow; there was also a tray containing books on the duties of Rhahaans, on religion, and the forms of religious worship.

Having rested here for a short time, we next visited the Kioum, which was the ordinary residence of the Seredaw. This building far exceeded, in size and splendour, any that we had before seen, and is perhaps the most magnificent of its kind in the universe; it is constructed entirely of wood, and resembles in the style of its structure and ornaments, that in which we had an interview with the Seredaw,

but was much more spacious and lofty. The numerous rows of pillars, some of them sixty feet high, all of which were covered with burnished gilding, had a wonderfully splendid effect: it would be difficult to convey, either in language or by pencil, an adequate description of this extraordinary edifice. The profuse expenditure of gilding on parts exposed to the weather, as well as in the inside, cannot fail to impress a stranger with astonishment at the richness of the decoration, although he may not approve of the taste with which it is disposed: I could not have formed in my imagination a display more strikingly magnificent. This Kioum was also divided by a partition, which separated it in the middle from north to south. There was a small room on one side, made of gilded boards, which we were told was the bedchamber of the Se-

redaw. Mats were spread on the outside for the attendant Rhahaans. The figure of Gaudma was made of copper, and an European girandole of cut-glass stood before his throne.

Leaving this building, we passed through many courts crowded with smaller temples and Kioums. Several gigantic images of Rakuss, the Hindoo demon, half beast, half human, made of brass, were shewed to us, as composing a part of the spoils of Arracan. From these we were conducted to a magnificent temple which is erecting for the image of Gaudma, that was brought from the same country. The idol is made of polished brass, about ten feet high, and sitting in the usual posture, on a pedestal within an arched recess; the walls are gilded, and adorned with bits of different coloured mirrors, disposed

with much taste. Peculiar sanctity is ascribed to this image, and devotees resort from every part of the empire, to adore the Arracan Gaudma, which is not exposed at all hours to the view of the vulgar. The doors of the recess are only opened when persons of particular consequence come to visit it, or at stated times, to indulge the populace. As we approached, a crowd of people thronged after us with tumultuous enthusiasm, striving for admittance to offer up a prayer to this brazen representative of the divinity. We soon turned from these wretched fanatics, and the object of their stupid adoration, to view the noble piasath, or royal spire, that crowned the building, and attracted much more of our attention and respect, than an image, from which even the statuary could claim no praise. The spire rose in seven separate stages above the

roof of the Kioum; and the gold leaf, which had recently been applied, glistening in the sun-beams, reflected a brilliant lustre. This temple, with its auxiliary buildings, which are yet in an unfinished state, will, when completed, be the most elegant in the empire, though perhaps not so spacious as that which is the present residence of the Seredaw. From hence we were conducted to what is called the Chounda, or place for the reception and repose of strangers who come from a distance to offer up their devotions. It communicates on the north side with the great temple, and is also a very beautiful specimen of Birman architecture; it comprehends five long galleries separated by colonnades, each consisting of thirty-four pillars, or two hundred and four altogether; the two central rows were about twenty-five feet high, but the external

ones did not exceed fourteen; they were painted of a deep crimson ground, enlivened by festoons of gold leaf encircling them in a very fanciful and pleasing manner, and in a style much more conformable to European taste than an unvaried surface of gold. The ceiling likewise was embellished with a profusion of carved work, executed with great labour and minuteness. Measuring by our steps, we judged the length to be five hundred and seventy-six feet, and the breadth of each distinct gallery about twelve; the central rather wider than those on either side. A low railing extended along the outer pillars, to prevent improper persons and dogs from defiling the place. It is built upon a terrace of brick, elevated three feet from the ground; and the floor is made of Chunam, or fine stucco, composed of lime, pounded steatites, and oil, the co-

hesion of which forms a hard and smooth surface, that shines like marble*. Our conductor informed us, that this edifice had been lately erected at the sole expence of the senior Woongee. It certainly reflects credit on the projector, and is an ornament to the country.

The heat of the day, which had now attained its greatest force, and our having been in constant exercise from seven in the morning till two o'clock in the afternoon, rendered a place of repose extremely acceptable; and here we not only rested ourselves, but likewise found a plentiful collation prepared for us. Our conductors, aware that the attention of strangers could not fail to be engaged for some

* The reader may see a particular account of the Chunam and its properties in Dr. Anderson's "Recreations in Agriculture," &c.

hours by such a multitude of new and striking objects, thought it would be more prudent for us to wait under the shade of this hospitable roof till the afternoon, than expose ourselves unnecessarily to a burning sun. We had brought with us, at the instance of our friends, wine, bread and butter, and cold fowl, to which the Shawbunder had added a tureen of excellent vermicelli soup, and a tolerable good pillaw. We sat down to our repast about two o'clock, and after it was finished continued to recline upon our mats until evening, fanned by a cool and refreshing breeze from the west, whilst we conversed, and contemplated the scene around. The crowd of people, whom the novelty of our appearance had collected, were neither intrusive nor troublesome. On such an occasion, in most other countries of the East, it is probable

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that, from the prejudices of bigotry, we should not have been suffered to depart without receiving some insult, or remarking some indication of contempt; but here, notwithstanding we entered their most sanctified recesses, we were every where treated with uniform civility. The presence of those who accompanied us had doubtless some influence in commanding the awe of the multitude; and if their respect was owing to this motive, it speaks highly for the state of their police; but I am inclined also to give them credit for a disposition naturally kind and benevolent.

In the afternoon we returned home by the same road that we came; and our attention being less engaged than in the morning, we had a better opportunity to judge of the form and extent of the for-

tress, as we passed along the north side, from one end to the other *.

The fort of Ummerapoora is an exact square: there are four principal gates, one in the centre of each face; there is also a smaller gate on each side of the great gate, equidistant between it and the angle of the fort, comprizing twelve gates in all. At each angle of the fort there is a large quadrangular bastion, that projects considerably. There are also eleven smaller bastions on each side, including those that are over the gateways. Between each of these bastions is extended a curtain about two hundred yards long. From this calculation, a side of the fort occupies two thousand four hundred yards; the Birmans, however, called it four

* See a plan of the fort of Ummerapoora in the Map prefixed to this work.

thousand nine hundred royal cubits, which I conceive to be an exaggerated account. Every bastion and gateway is covered by a tiled roof, supported on four pillars of wood, to prevent injury from the lodgment of rain.

At each corner of the fort there is a gilded temple, nearly one hundred feet in height, but so insignificant, comparatively, with those we had just seen, as not to attract particular notice.

We could perceive, from our elephants, the roof of a range of buildings in the inside, parallel to the walls, and extending along one entire side of the fort, which our conductors said was the public granary and store-rooms.

We arrived at our grove half an hour

after dark, wearied by the heat of the weather and the exercise of the day, but gratified to the highest degree with the multiplicity and extraordinary splendour of the objects we had seen. Much as we had heard of the magnificence of their religious buildings, our expectations had been more than fulfilled. The unbounded expenditure of gilding which they bestow on the outside of the roofs, as well as within, must exhaust immense sums. I was informed that the gold leaf is exceedingly pure, and bears exposure to the air for a long time, without suffering injury. The size or glue used to make it adhere is called Seesee: it is the juice of the croton sebiferum, after undergoing a certain preparation. This is the only manner in which a people, naturally frugal and disinclined to luxury, seem to apply their superfluous wealth. It is to be la-

mented, that their edifices are in general composed of such a perishable material as wood, which, though of the most durable kind perhaps in the world, cannot last for many generations, or leave to posterity a monumental proof of the taste and magnificence of the national architecture.

CHAPTER XVII.

Reason to hope for a prosperous Termination of the Embassy—meet with strenuous Opposition—on what Grounds.—Vessel arrives at Rangoon from Mauritius—News from Europe unpleasant—industriously propagated.—Mr. Wood visits the Woongees—polite Reception—remarkable Circumstance—require to know his Majesty's Pleasure—Day appointed for the Delivery of Presents from the Birman King.—Conversation at the Lotoo—Arrogance of the Birman Court—resolve to remonstrate—uncivil Treatment.—Mr. Wood presents a written and solemn Declaration—Ferment caused by it—favourable Conclusion.—A Day appointed for our Reception by the King.—Liberal Return of Presents—different Articles.—Proceed to the Palace—Introduction—Hall of Audience—the King—his Dress—Person—Manner—Receive official Papers in

the Rhoom.—Formality in conveying the King's Letter.—Return.

WHILST we were thus passing our time in amusement, and the indulgence of our curiosity, the more important interests of the mission were not forgotten. The council, I was informed, had held frequent deliberations on some general propositions which I had submitted with a view to assist the mercantile interests of the two countries, and place commerce on a liberal and secure basis. I had reason given me to conclude, that my suggestions had met with a favourable reception, and I was likewise informed by an authority which I conceived to be competent, that it was intended to depute a Birman officer of distinction in an official capacity to Bengal, there to confirm, on the part of his Birman Majesty, the good understanding that was henceforth to

subsist between the Court of Ummerapoora, and the Government General of India. Assurances of this nature, together with the attention paid to our private accommodation, induced me to hope for a favourable termination of the mission with which I was entrusted.

I soon found, however, that the attainment of these objects, which were obviously calculated to be of reciprocal advantage to British India and the Birman empire, was opposed by the indirect artifices of individuals possessing weight, whose interests might eventually be affected by any innovation, and who on that account sedulously fomented jealousy and distrust. I likewise learned, that the pride of the court had been early awakened, by a representation, that the government of Bengal being provincial, and the

Governor-General, from whom I derived my commission, only the subject of a king, it would therefore be derogatory to the Birman monarch to treat on terms of equality with an administration that was subordinate, or to correspond with any person beneath the dignity of a crowned head. It is doubtful however whether the Birman court would have manifested its sentiments so unequivocally as to draw from me a formal explanation, had not circumstances subsequently occurred, which served to strengthen its arrogance, and gave plausibility to the representations that had been fabricated to mislead.

Matters were in this state, when advice came of the arrival of a small vessel at Rangoon from the Isle of France, under Birman colours, which brought an unfavourable account of the situation of af-

fairs in Europe; exaggerating the disappointment of the allies on the continent to a total defeat; and adding, that the Dutch and Spaniards having joined the republicans, the utter ruin of the English was not far distant. An obscure agent, maintained at Rangoon by the French, transmitted this information to a person of some official importance at the Birman capital, who immediately promulgated it with an addition, that a powerful fleet was on its voyage from France to India, and that four French ships of war were triumphantly cruizing in the Indian seas.

This intelligence, which was asserted with confidence, was diligently improved by the Armenian and Mussulman merchants, who insinuated that, if our present overtures sprung not from treachery, they originated in fear; at the same time

renewing a report, which had more than once been current, of a combination of all the powers of India to deprive Great Britain of her possessions in the East, and to expel all Europeans from those shores, which they were represented to have first visited as merchants, and afterwards invaded as usurpers. Although the Birmans probably did not give implicit credit to the last mentioned rumour, yet the news from Europe co-operating with their own pride determined them to persist in that arrogant assumption of superiority, which had hitherto been manifested rather in their actions than by their words.

On the 7th of September, Mr. Wood, in conformity with the instructions he received, waited on the two senior Woongees, accompanied by Dr. Buchanan, and attended by a proportion of the public

servants. On his return, he addressed an official letter to me, (Appendix, No. I.) by which it appears, that in his reception no part of the respect due to his public character was omitted; whilst in the solicitude expressed for our personal welfare, there was displayed the refined politeness of a polished court. The conversation that he held with the Woongees was nevertheless marked by a circumstance which served to indicate more pointedly the precise line that was intended to be drawn.

On the day of my public introduction at the Lotoo, it was an omission too remarkable to escape notice, that no enquiry whatever had been made respecting the Governor-General of India, nor in the conversations which I afterwards held with the several princes was the name of

the Governor-General once mentioned by them. Such however was not the case at the interview between Mr. Wood and the Woongees; these ministers enquired particularly concerning Sir John Shore, and the younger Woongee desired to be informed of the extent of the Governor-General's authority, which implied, on his part, either real or assumed ignorance. These questions also, as appears from Mr. Wood's report, did not arise from the casual suggestion of the moment, but were all preconcerted and methodically arranged; the inferences therefore to be deduced from them were grounds on which I might form a judgment; they conveyed something more than a presumption of the real sentiments entertained respecting the delegating authority under which I acted.

There being no plausible pretext for any longer delay, I pressed the Woongees to inform me what his Majesty's pleasure was, regarding the several points which I had submitted to his council; and intimated the necessity I was under of obeying the orders of my own government, by returning as speedily as was consistent with the objects for which I had been deputed. In reply to this application, I was apprized that the presents which his Birman Majesty designed to send to Bengal, in return for those he had received, would be prepared on the 19th of September, on which day, if I would come to the Lotoo, they should be delivered to me, matters of business might be discussed, and I might fix on whatever day I thought proper to depart.

With this desire I willingly acquiesced,

as affording me an opportunity of requiring to know his Majesty's real sentiments, as well as the motives that on their part gave rise to a conduct of so mysterious a nature.

Nothing passed in the interval, except that I received intimation through a private and respectable channel, that the court, although no objection would be formally stated, had come to a decided resolution of considering me as a person deputed from a provincial and subordinate power, and not as the representative of an equal and sovereign state; and that in pursuance of this estimation his Majesty did not intend to honour me with a personal audience of leave. Of the truth of this information I had no reason to doubt; but before I took any measures to undeceive the court in a public manner, I

deemed it expedient to have an assumption so haughty and imperious verified by the highest authority.

On the 19th of September I proceeded to the Lotoo, where I arrived about twelve o'clock, and found the council of state already assembled; the ministers and the attendant officers being all dressed in their robes and caps of ceremony. A few minutes after we had taken our seats, the presents were brought, consisting of three large boxes, covered with red cloth, and two elephant's teeth of considerable size. These I was desired to receive, in the name of the Birman king, for the English government: at the same time, two large rings were presented to me; one a single ruby set in gold, the other a sapphire, which I was requested to accept as a personal token of his Majesty's favour: a

ring was also given to Mr. Wood, and another to Dr. Buchanan. When this ceremony was ended, I addressed myself in the Birman language to the Woongees, and desired to know whether there were any reasons which applied to my situation, that had induced his Majesty to decline honouring me with a personal audience; which compliment, I understood, was usually paid by their court to the deputies of all sovereign states. To this interrogation I received an equivocal reply; and on repeating it, they persisted in returning an evasive answer. I then desired to be informed, whether or not it was his Majesty's intention to receive me in person, before my departure, as the representative of the Governor-General. This question they said they could not answer, not knowing his Majesty's pleasure. I afterwards asked, whether the king preserved

his intention of sending an authorized person from his court to Bengal, as had been intimated to me by what I conceived to be competent authority; and whether the suggestions, which I had submitted for the advancement and protection of commerce, had been taken into consideration. These several points, they said, were then under discussion, and would be speedily determined; they acquainted me at the same time, that if I would fix on any precise period for my departure, the necessary papers and letters should be prepared, and delivered to me two days previous to my setting out. I mentioned the 3d of October; they replied, that the letters should be in readiness by what I understood to be the 1st of October; but by some misapprehension was the 30th of September; adding their hope that I would come to town on the 28th of Sep-

tember, the anniversary of Sandaing-guite, a day on which all the nobility pay homage to his Majesty. To their invitation I answered, that my having that honour must depend on circumstances not yet ascertained.

This interview left me little room to doubt of the estimation in which the Birman court held my public character, notwithstanding it was judged adviseable, from motives of policy, to avoid making any direct avowal of such sentiments. Proceeding upon this plan, they concealed all their acts and determinations with a veil of ambiguity, which it sometimes was extremely difficult to penetrate.

Pride, the chief actuating principle of this arrogant court, was the source to which its conduct, in every transaction of

a public nature, might ultimately be traced. The first object of their government is to impress on the minds of the people the most reverential awe of their own sovereign, whose greatness they do not admit to be equalled by that of any monarch upon earth. Without attempting to diminish their veneration for their own prince, it became my duty, from the mode that was adopted in the display of his consequence, to acquaint the ministers, in terms which could not be misconstrued, that there was another power, at no great distance, which would not readily subscribe to its own inferiority, or admit of any act in its negotiations with other states, which might either express or imply an assumption of superiority. It became necessary to inform them, that the Governor-General of India was not, in his relation to their court, or to that of

any other eastern potentate, a subordinate provincial officer; but a personage in whom sovereign authority over a widely extended empire was efficiently vested; that, as the representative of such authority, I held an indisputable claim to whatever consideration was granted to the ministers of other nations; and that the withholding it, would be accounted an incivility so great, as probably to prevent the English government from making any future advances for the establishment of a friendly and confidential intercourse.

To convey a truth not less important for them to know than incumbent on me to declare, I determined to address a letter to the principal Woongee and the council of state, expressing my dissatisfaction at the conduct which the Birman court had thought proper to observe in regard to my

public character; to require an explanation of those points which comprehended the objects of the embassy; and to demand, that I should be received and acknowledged by the King in person as the representative of an equal and sovereign state.

Had there even been room left for me to hesitate upon the adoption of this step, the following circumstances, which occurred immediately after my interview with the Woongees at the Lotoo, would have decided me, in making a public declaration of my sentiments on a mode of behaviour which exceeded even their usual extent of official arrogance, and fell little short of personal indignity.

The custom, which imposes an obligation on a foreign minister, to pay a mark

of respect by a trifling present to each member of the royal family to whom he is introduced, has already been noticed: this compliment I offered in person to the several princes on the days of my presentation; and, in order to manifest that it was not my desire to withhold any attention consistent with my situation to grant, soon after the visits of ceremony were ended, I had directed my Moonshee, or Persian secretary, to wait on each of the ministers and the principal officers of the court, and request in my name their acceptance of some rarity, the produce of Europe or of India. The gift to each individual was very trifling; a few yards of European broad cloth, an article of cut-glass, a piece of Bengal muslin or of silk, was received as a polite and handsome testimonial of a friendly disposition. These civilities, I was informed, were, by a spe-

cial mandate, ordered to be returned, by every person to whom the attention had been shewn, in some production of the Birman country, and of value equal to what had been bestowed.

It being expected that I should wait on the royal princes to receive in person the remuneration which they designed to make for the presents they had obtained, I sent, on the 21st of September, a message to the Engy Teekien, to acquaint him that, if it suited his convenience, I would pay my respects to him the following day, or postpone my visit to any other that he might think proper to appoint: I likewise dispatched a messenger with a similar notification to the Prince of Prome. From the first I received a civil reply, excusing himself from seeing me on account of the indisposition of the

princess, who had lately been brought to bed; but acquainting me, that if I chose to attend, the presents for the English government would be delivered to me in the Rhoom of his palace, or to any person whom I might appoint to receive them. I replied, that being debarred of the honour of seeing him, I would depute Mr. Wood to accept his presents in the name of the Governor-General of India; from the Prince of Prome I had not the honour of an answer.

On the 22d, Mr. Wood waited on the Engy Teekien, and was received with much civility at the Rhoom by his ministers; the presents were formally produced, and conveyed to our residence by the prince's servants. As the Prince of Prome had not returned an answer to my message, I imagined that some misapprehen-

sion had occurred. Being desirous of appearing to put the most favourable construction on every part of their conduct, I requested Mr. Wood to send a messenger, when he went to the house of the Engy Teekien, to apprize the Prince of Prome that he meant afterwards to pay his respects to him. To this intimation was returned what Mr. Wood considered a satisfactory reply: and as soon as the first visit was ended, he proceeded to the Prince of Prome's palace, where the treatment he received was extremely rude; after standing for some time at the outer gate, exposed to the sun, he was informed that the prince was not at home.

However deficient the members of the royal family might be in politeness to me, I determined not to suffer their ex-

ample to influence my conduct towards them, or to neglect any mark of deference that was due to their illustrious rank. Meedaw Praw, the mother of the Queen, being a personage venerable from her age, and dignified from her high connections; her behaviour also on our introduction having been distinguished by affability and politeness; I was, for these reasons, desirous of paying such a character particular respect; and with that view sent a complimentary message to her, similar to that which had been delivered to the two princes: she returned, in answer, that the next day would be perfectly convenient to her for my reception. I likewise intimated to the younger princes my intention of paying them a visit, to which they replied by a verbal compliment.

On the next day, the 23d, I proceeded

in form to the house of Meedaw Praw at the appointed hour, and was received with sufficient politeness by her Woon, or principal officer; there were several persons of rank assembled in the hall when I entered. After we had been seated about a quarter of an hour, a person came forth from the inner apartment, and informed us that the princess had gone to the palace to see the Queen her daughter, but would return in a few minutes. This I thought rather an extraordinary step, as she herself had determined the precise time when I was to come. These minutes, however, were protracted to an hour: in the interval, pawn, fruit, and sweetmeats were served up. At length, when her ministers perceived that my patience was exhausted, and I would wait no longer, a message was delivered to me from the princess, excusing her

non-appearance on a plea of indisposition; at the same time three gold rings, set with rubies and sapphires, and several boxes, handsomely japanned and painted, were laid before me, and my acceptance of them desired. A conduct marked by such deliberate unpoliteness would have justified retaliation on my part, by a contemptuous rejection of her presents; I however refrained from any farther indication of displeasure, than withdrawing unceremoniously, without taking any notice of the boxes or rings, which were immediately conveyed to my residence by her servants. Having reason to apprehend that the junior princes meant to observe a similar line of conduct, I declined visiting them, but sent Mr. Wood to go through the ceremony of calling at their separate houses. As was expected, he saw not one of the princes, but was

received by their Woons, who, though they carefully refrained from absolute rudeness, yet evinced in their conduct the utmost arrogance, under the cloak of supercilious civility.

Such strange and unwarrantable insolence could not be measured by any scale of true policy, and was hardly to be reconciled to reason or common sense; nor could any part of their conduct be laid to the account of ignorance; for no people on earth better understand, or more pointedly observe, the minute punctilios of official form. No candid and determinate reply could be extorted from them on any point in which their vanity was concerned: what their court intended to concede, I understood, was to be granted, not as an equivalent for reciprocal privileges on our part, but as a boon, as an

act of gratuitous condescension to me, in the character of a petitioner, bearing the tribute of homage from an inferior state. Without the hardiness to avow these principles, which a sense of British power, and the proximity of the country, probably suppressed, they nevertheless acted upon them as an assumed fact, with a view to gratify their own pride, elude disagreeable explanations, and reap all the advantages derivable from an intercourse with British India, to which they certainly were far from being averse, provided the correspondence could be maintained upon their own terms.

In pursuance of my determination, I addressed the letter (Appendix, No. II.) to the chief Woongee and council of state; and, to give it all the publicity that such a declaration ought to have, I sent Mr.

Wood to deliver it in person to the minister, directing him afterwards to wait on the two junior Woongees, and apprize them formally of my having written a letter of such a tenour.

Nor did I resolve on this measure without maturely considering the effect it was likely to produce, as well as the necessity in which it originated. The court had evidently been embarrassed in the first stages of the business, and was undetermined in what manner to act; to this irresolution I ascribe the petty artifice of misinforming me in matters of fact. The accounts from Europe certainly had great weight in influencing their conduct, and those could only be discredited by my holding higher language than before: to have acquiesced in silence would have been construed into at least a presump-

tive evidence of our weakness, whilst the slight that was attempted to be cast on the authority delegated to me, left no alternative but to endeavour to remove it by a temperate remonstrance, such as my letter was intended to convey, or to decline any further communication, and withdraw without ceremony. This latter step was not to be taken under any provocation short of personal injury, than which I believe nothing was farther from their intention. To enhance their own importance by the unworthy mode of lessening that of others, seemed to be the sole motive that actuated them, and which, as far as related to the government that I represented, it was clearly my duty to oppose.

My letter was written in the English

and the Persian languages*: the intervention of holidays prevented the delivery of it before the 26th, when Mr. Wood waited on the principal Woongee, and

* It afforded me particular satisfaction to know, that the full purport and expression of my letter could not fail to be conveyed, through the channel of either of these languages, to the Birman court. The Armenian interpreter of English, who had spent the greater part of his life in the Birman country, was a man eminently qualified for the task: he spoke, read, and wrote English, superior to any person I ever knew who had not been in Great Britain. It is a singular fact, that the first version of the late Sir William Jones's Translation of the Institutes of Hindoo Law, should be made in the Birman language. When I arrived at Ummerapoora, the Armenian had just completed the work, by command of his Birman majesty. This circumstance offers no mean proof of the liberal and enlightened policy of a prince, who, superior to general prejudice, was willing to seek for information through a medium by which few other nations of the East will condescend to accept of knowledge, however beneficial the attainment might prove to themselves.

presented it in form; he afterwards called upon the junior Woongees, and acquainted them of his having laid before the senior an address which required their serious consideration.

I imagine, that if this explicit avowal of my sentiments had been made previously to our last-mentioned visits to the members of the royal family, we should have had less cause to complain of incivility. Such language, I believe, was not expected; the court had assured itself that the state of our affairs in Europe and in India was so critical, that we would tolerate yet greater arrogance of manner, rather than hazard the interruption of intercourse, and give our enemies the advantage of an alliance which the native vanity of the Birmans rendered them not unwilling to over-rate.

Information was conveyed to me from a respectable quarter, that the fermentation which my remonstrance excited in the council of the Lotoo was by no means moderate: the Woongees, I was told, were divided in their opinions; the discussion continued till twelve o'clock on the night of the 27th, when the result of their deliberations was laid before the King.

Whatever might have been their separate sentiments, the ultimate decision was temperate and wise. I was apprized, late on the evening of the 28th, by a verbal communication from the Maywoon of Pegue, that on the day appointed for the delivery of the reply to the Governor-General's letter, I should be formally received at the palace of the King, who would grant me a personal

audience in the character to which I laid claim, and that the propositions which I had suggested, for the regulation and encouragement of commerce, had for the most part received his Majesty's approbation.

I expressed, in answer, the satisfaction I felt from hearing a resolution so creditable to themselves; but added, that as the letter I had written was a public and solemn declaration, I should require more than a verbal assurance, before I could consistently subject myself to a repetition of former disappointments, and requested that he would take the trouble to reduce his obliging message to writing: with this he readily complied by a short note written in the Birman language.

The form of receiving the presents,

which were brought to me as a return for those that had been given, occupied a considerable portion of the last days. One of the three boxes that had been sent by the King contained amber in large pieces, uncommonly pure; another, a mass of stone of considerable size, in appearance resembling the chrysoprase; and the third, a large and beautiful group of crystals, rising from a matrix of amethyst, in the form of prisms, mostly hexagonal or pentagonal, slightly striated on the surface, and terminated at one end by a pyramid composed of three rhomboidal planes. It was a very curious production of nature, and doubtless, coming from such a quarter, must have been accounted of great value. The present from the Engy Teekien consisted of six ruby and sapphire rings, two elephants teeth, several japanned boxes, and three horses,

small, like all those which the country produces, but extremely well formed: two were piebald, to match in a carriage; and the other was a bright bay. The principal Queen also, whose title is Nandoh Praw, and the second Queen, called Myack Nandoh, sent their separate offerings, and added to several rings and specimens of japanned ware, some handsome articles of plate, two large beetle-boxes, of embossed silver, two trays and two drinking cups of the same metal, the workmanship of which did not afford a favourable proof of the skill of their artists. Retributary donations were now brought in troublesome abundance from every individual to whom the smallest gratification had been given; and in some instances the return far exceeded in value what had been received: my house was encumbered with all sorts of Birman

utensils in painted and japanned ware, several of which were by no means of a portable size. I was also presented with pieces of silk and cotton cloth, of different dimensions and quality, in number not less than eighty or a hundred; also elephants teeth, amber wrought into beads, fifty or sixty pieces of plate formed into beetle-boxes, mugs, spitting pots and cups; precious stones too constituted a very general gift, chiefly rubies and sapphires in their native state, rudely set in gold. I received from various persons nearly a hundred of these stones, few of which were valuable, though some of the sapphires, on being polished by a lapidary, proved to have a very fine water. I must not, however, omit mentioning a beautiful specimen of filagree, in a large silver beetle-box, which was presented to me by one of the Attawoons; the workman-

ship was minutely delicate, and exquisitely finished; and, in order to enhance the value of the gift, the donor, with a politeness that could not be surpassed in any court, had his title engraven in English letters on the side of the box: a compliment so handsomely conveyed demanded my best acknowledgments, and I regretted exceedingly that the official character which I held denied me the personal acquaintance of this minister, as well as of some others, with whom I should have been happy, under any other circumstances, to have cultivated an intimacy.

On the 30th of September, the day appointed by his Birman majesty to receive the English gentlemen in the character of an imperial deputation, we crossed the lake at ten o'clock in the morning, at-

tended by our customary suite, and accompanied by Baba-Sheen and several Birman officers. We entered the fort, as usual, by the western gate, when, instead of passing, as on former occasions, along the north side of the enclosure of the palace, to reach the street leading down to the Lotoo, we now proceeded round by the south, and in this new direction observed many more houses of distinguished structure than by the other route. In our way we passed through a short street, entirely composed of saddlers' and harness makers' shops. On alighting, we were conducted into the Rhoom, to wait there until the Engy Teekien should arrive, which he did precisely at the hour of twelve. Several Chobwas, who were to be introduced on this day, had taken their seats in the Rhoom before we entered; each of them

held a piece of silk or cotton cloth in his lap, designed, according to the established etiquette, as a propitiatory offering to his Majesty; and on the cloth was placed a saucer, containing a small quantity of unboiled rice, which it seems is an indispensable part of the ceremony. The Birman custom differs in this particular from the usage of Hindostan: a person, on his presentation at the imperial court of Delhi, offers to the sovereign an odd number of the gold coin commonly called Mohurs *, an even number being considered as inauspicious; but the court of Ummerapoora, with a more delicate refinement, never permits an offering in

* Mohur is a corrupt name given by Europeans to this coin. Ashurfi is its proper term; Pagoda likewise, as applied to a coin, is an illegitimate word, of which the natives know nothing except on the authority of their conquerors.

money, but requires from a foreigner something of the produce of his country, and from a subject some article of manufacture. The donation of rice is not, as in India, when presented by Brahmins to the incarnations of Vishnu, meant as an acknowledgment of divine attributes, but is merely designed as a recognition of the power of the monarch, and an acknowledgment of the property of the soil being vested in him; a truth which is expressively declared, by offering him its most useful production. During our continuance in the Rhoom, tea was served to us; and when we advanced to the outer gate, we were not obliged to put off our shoes, but were permitted to wear them until we had reached the inner inclosure that separates the court of the Lotoo from that of the royal palace, within which not any nobleman

of the court is allowed to go with his feet covered. There is a double partition wall dividing the two courts, with an intervening space of ten or twelve feet, through which a gallery leads, that is appropriated exclusively to the use of the King when he chuses to preside in person in the Lotoo.

On entering the gate, we perceived the royal saloon of ceremony in front of us, and the court assembled in all the parade of pomp and decoration. It was an open hall, supported by colonnades of pillars twenty in length, and only four in depth: we were conducted into it by a flight of steps, and, advancing, took our places next the space opposite to the throne, which is always left vacant, as being in full view of his Majesty. On our entrance, the basement of the throne,

as at the Lotoo, was alone visible, which we judged to be about five feet high; folding doors screened the seat from our view. The throne, called Yazapalay, was richly gilded and carved; on each side a small gallery, inclosed by a gilt balustrade, extended a few feet to the right and left, containing four umbrellas of state; and on two tables, at the foot of the throne, were placed several large vessels of gold, of various forms, and for different purposes: immediately over the throne, a splendid piasath rose in seven stages above the roofs of the building, crowned by a tee, or umbrella, from which a spiral rod was elevated above the whole.

We had been seated little more than a quarter of an hour, when the folding doors that concealed the seat opened with

a loud noise, and discovered his Majesty ascending a flight of steps that led up to the throne from the inner apartment; he advanced but slowly, and seemed not to possess a free use of his limbs, being obliged to support himself with his hands on the balustrade. I was informed, however, that this appearance of weakness did not proceed from any bodily infirmity, but from the weight of the regal habiliments in which he was clad; and if what we were told was true, that he carried on his dress fifteen viss, upwards of fifty pounds avoirdupois of gold, his difficulty of ascent was not surprising. On reaching the top he stood for a minute, as though to take breath, and then sat down on an embroidered cushion with his legs inverted. His crown was a high conical cap, richly studded with precious stones; his fingers were covered with rings; and

in his dress he bore the appearance of a man cased in golden armour, whilst a gilded, or probably a golden wing on each shoulder, did not add much lightness to his figure. His looks denoted him to be between fifty and sixty years old, of a strong make, in stature rather beneath the middle height, with hard features and of a dark complexion; yet the expression of his countenance was not unpleasing, and seemed, I thought, to indicate an intelligent and inquiring mind.

On the first appearance of his Majesty, all the courtiers bent their bodies, and held their hands joined in an attitude of supplication. Nothing farther was required of us, than to lean a little forward, and to turn in our legs as much as we could; not any act being so unpolite, or contrary to etiquette, as to present the

soles of the feet towards the face of a dignified person. Four Bramins, dressed in white caps and gowns, chanted the usual prayer at the foot of the throne: a Nakhaan then advanced into the vacant space before the King, and recited in a musical cadence the name of each person who was to be introduced on that day, and of whose present, in the character of a suppliant, he entreated his Majesty's acceptance. My offering consisted of two pieces of Benares gold brocade; Doctor Buchanan and Mr. Wood each presented one. When our names were mentioned, we were separately desired to take a few grains of rice in our hands, and, joining them, to bow to the King as low as we conveniently could, with which we immediately complied. When this ceremony was finished, the King uttered a few indistinct words, to convey, as I was in-

formed, an order for investing some persons present with the insignia of a certain degree of nobility: the imperial mandate was instantly proclaimed aloud by heralds in the court. His Majesty remained only a few minutes longer, and during that time looked at us attentively, but did not honour us with any verbal notice, or speak at all, except to give the order before mentioned. When he rose to depart, he manifested the same signs of infirmity as on his entrance; after he had withdrawn, the folding doors were closed, and the court broke up.

In descending, we took notice of two pieces of cannon, apparently nine pounders, which were placed in the court, on either side of the stairs, to defend the entrance of the palace. Sheds protected them from the weather, and they were gilded all

over: a royal carriage also was in waiting, of curious workmanship, and ornamented with a royal spire; there was a pair of horses harnessed to it, whose trappings glistened in the sun.

We returned as usual to the Rhoom, where I understood that the letter from the King to the Governor-General of India was to be presented to me, together with some other documents that comprehended the objects of the embassy. Soon after the members of the royal family had ascended their elephants, the expected letter was brought from the Lotoo on a tray, borne by a Nakhaan, inclosed in a case of wood japanned and covered with a scarlet cloth. The mode of offering it, was not, I conceived, quite so ceremonious as the occasion seemed to require; and the officer who was charged with the

delivery indicated a reluctance to say that it was a letter from the King to the Governor-General of India. This circumstance produced some difficulty, as, without being distinctly informed to whom the letter was directed, I declined accepting it. At length the interpreter, finding I would not receive it on other terms, delivered it in a suitable manner, with a declaration that it was a reply from his Birman Majesty to the letter of the British Governor-General of India, and that a copy of a royal mandate was annexed to it, granting to the English nation certain valuable immunities and privileges of trade.

Whilst we were in the outer court, or that in which the Lotoo is situated, we had an opportunity of viewing the immense piece of ordnance found in the

fortress of Arracan when captured by the Engy Teekien, which was afterwards conveyed by water to adorn the capital of the conqueror, where it is now preserved as a trophy, and is highly honoured, being gilded, and covered by a roof of a dignified order. It is formed of brass, rudely manufactured; the length is thirty feet, the diameter at the muzzle two and a half, and the calibre measured ten inches; it is mounted on a low truck carriage supported by six wheels; near it lay a long rammer and sponge staff, and we perceived several shot made of hewn stone fitted to the calibre. It is remarkable, that most of the spoils which had been brought from Arracan were made of brass; the image of Gaudma, the lions, the demons, and the gun, all transported from thence, are composed of that metal.

The discussion, on the ceremony of delivering the letter, being ended, we returned home, preceded by a Miouseree, or inferior secretary, on horseback, bearing in due form the royal letter, and dressed in his cap and gown of office. When we had reached our residence, I immediately addressed the chief minister, to request an official translation of the letter in the Persian language, also of the paper annexed to it; observing, that as public interpreters of that tongue were appointed by the court, and it being well understood by several persons resident at Ummerapoora, a medium of intercourse could never be wanting, which would be equally intelligible and convenient to their government and to mine. Within two days I received a notification, that his Majesty had given orders to supply me with the translation I required.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Substance of official Papers.—Prepare to depart.—Chinese Deputies—take Leave preparatory to their Return.—Birman Books—sold clandestinely to Strangers.—A Man imprisoned.—Liberal Conduct of the Court—Siamese Painter.—Birman Festival—the Court of the Queen attended by all the Women of Rank—Illuminations.—Unceremonious Visit to the Engy Teekien.—Embark on board our Boats—delayed.—Letter from the principal Woongee to the Governor-General of India.—Ill Treatment suffered by one of our People—Insolence of the Followers of the Prince of Tongho.—Leave Ummerapoora.—Visit Chagaing—Description of the Fort.—Oderua, or Pot Village.—Kieock, the great Manufactory of Birman Idols.—Temple of Commodoo Praw.—Fireworks—Rockets of extraordinary Magnitude.—Chagaing—an Emporium of Cot-

ton—ancient Ava.—Temple of Logatherpoo Praw—stupendous Idol.—Sandaht, or Elephant Town.—Keenduem River.—Niouندoh.—Pegahm—Civility of the Mioudogee, or Deputy Governor—ride to view the Ruins —curious Temple—Art of turning Arches —lost by the Birmans.—Reach the Town of Sillah Mew.

THE intervention of holidays, together with the unavoidable delays of office, protracted the delivery of the Persian translations until the 14th of October; on which day the papers, properly authenticated, were brought from the Lotoo, and delivered to me, by an officer of government. In translating these documents, I carefully collated the Persian version with the Birman original, which I was enabled to do by the assistance of persons on the spot who understood both languages, and found the Persian to be as literal a translation as the different idioms would admit.

The letter of his Birman majesty to the Governor-General (Appendix, No. III.) is a curious specimen of the extravagant phraseology of oriental composition: a great part of it is the diction of the minister, which may be considered as the preamble of the letter. In this portion are enumerated the royal titles, the honours conferred on the British representative, and the presents that were delivered; it next details the heads of certain propositions, which I had made with a view to advance the commercial interests of both nations; his Majesty then speaks in his own person, and, in the pompous style of an order, ratifies immunities of considerable importance to British merchants and mariners.

The paper which accompanied the letter (Appendix, No. IV.) is an order delivered

by the principal Woongee, to carry into effect the imperial mandate, and is addressed to the Maywoon of Pegue in particular, as holding the jurisdiction of Rangoon, and to the governors of sea-port towns in general. It, however, became necessary, in order to give full operation to his Majesty's good intentions, to obtain several subsidiary papers, which, by expressing in clear detail the regular dues of government, and specifying the authorized perquisites of office, might prevent in future any arbitrary exactions, and put an end to impositions which had long been practised on British merchants trading to Birman ports, from whom loud complaints had at different times reached the supreme government. These papers I found no difficulty in obtaining: it was determined by them, that all goods of Europe and British India manufacture, imported in

British ships, should be subject to a duty of ten per cent. to the King; the price of anchorage and pilotage, for ships of every rate, was determined; the fees of the provincial and port officers, charges for warehouse room, for interpreters and clearance, the customs to be levied at each house of collection on goods conveying up the river, were accurately defined; and teak timber, to us by far the most valuable commodity which the country produces, was ordered to pay a duty of five per cent. *ad valorem*, at whatever port it might be shipped, and all further exactions on that article were prohibited. The several demands of the port and provincial officers on the masters of ships, which had heretofore been paid in rouni, or pure silver, were directed to be taken in the currency of the place, which, at

Rangoon, is mowadzo, or silver depreciated twenty-five per cent.

These regulations, expressed in separate instruments with clearness and precision, were equally liberal and satisfactory; and, on the part of the Birman government, were voluntarily granted, from a conviction of the equity on which they were founded, and the reciprocal advantages they were likely to produce. From two propositions which I offered, the court thought proper to withhold its acquiescence; but it certainly was the intention of the King and his chief ministers, that the articles which were thus conceded should be carried into complete effect. Intercourse, however, was not yet perfectly established; many obstacles still impeded the way; the road was only

opened, and success depended on the discretion of those who should first pursue the track that was now pointed out.

Having thus obtained the objects for which I had been deputed, to an extent that equalled my utmost expectation, I prepared to depart. The waters of the great river had been subsiding for some time, by which the lake became so much reduced, that boats of burthen were obliged to leave it, and moor in the stream, the bar of sand at the entrance of the lake being almost dry in the fair season. The vast sheet of water, which, by taking a circuitous direction, had, on our first arrival, induced us to conclude that we were on an island, was now diminished to an inconsiderable surface, and left a large portion of land, which had recently been covered, in a state adapted for

the cultivation of rice. We observed the peasants industriously employed in turning up the oozy soil, preparatory to the reception of seed; and it was now manifest, that the place of our residence, which, from the encroachment of the periodical waters, we had considered as low, was in fact an elevated and commanding situation.

Early in October, the Chinese deputies, having fulfilled their diplomatic mission, left the grove, to return to their native country. They embarked on board commodious boats, in which I understood they were to travel for three weeks, and afterwards prosecute their route by land, until they got into the heart of the Chinese dominions, where water carriage is facilitated by numerous canals. They expected to find the cold intense before

their arrival at Pekin; a journey which they stated would require three months to perform. I presented the senior, at his last visit to me, with a wrapper of English broad cloth, which he remarked would be more comfortable in his journey among the cold hills of China, in the month of December, than his own garments of silk quilted with cotton. He apologized for not having any thing better to give me in return than some pieces of silk and a few fans; but his son, a promising youth of seventeen, who attended his father in quality of page, and who had been on more familiar terms with us than the natural gravity and public character of the seniors would allow to them, came to take leave of me just before his embarkation, and, observing that he should probably never see me again, entreated my acceptance of his

pillow and his purse, as memorials of the son of Keeloree *. When I hesitated in receiving what were conveniencies to him, but useless to me, he seemed so much hurt, that I could not wound the feelings of the ingenuous youth, by rejecting his artless token of good will. I had given him at different times a few trifling gratifications, and he could not reconcile himself to depart without making some return. His pillow was a light lacquered box, about eighteen inches long, circular at top, and covered with a case of silk, so thickly quilted with cotton as to render it soft. In a box of this sort, a Chinese, when he makes a journey, usually carries all his valuables; though unprovided with a lock, it is not easy to be opened, and the case is closely buttoned: thus a tra-

* This I conceive to be rather a title than his real name.

veller secures all his property by sleeping on it. This box was not empty; it contained the purse* before mentioned, a steel and flint to light fire, and a bracelet and ring of agate, which the donor assured me were endued with certain cabalistic virtues, to protect the possessor from the perils of the road.

During the time that matters of business were under discussion, and the necessary papers preparing, Mr. Wood employed his leisure hours in digesting his survey of the river, and in making astronomical observations; whilst Doctor Buchanan, ever assiduous in the pursuit of

* This purse bore an exact resemblance to the representation in Sir George Staunton's work, of the purse which his Imperial Majesty of China presented to the ambassador's page, when the British embassy was formally introduced.

knowledge, prosecuted botanical inquiries, and collected general information from every accessible source. Among other things, books in the Birman tongue were brought to him for sale, on which the owners put what seemed to be a very exorbitant price; and, either from real or pretended apprehension, these venders of Birman literature always produced their wares in a clandestine manner; assigning as a reason, that if any person were discovered to have sold books to a foreigner without permission, he would be liable to a severe penalty. This assertion we were at first inclined to consider rather as a pretext for enhancing the demand, than as founded on fact; one day, however, we understood that a man had actually been imprisoned for an offence of this nature, and was likely to suffer punishment. I immediately sent a

message to the chief Woongee, apprizing him of the circumstance, and desiring to know whether it was illegal to sell books to us; that if their law prohibited it, I should reject such as in future might be brought, and direct every person under my authority to do the same. The Woongee returned a civil message, and the man was set at liberty. His Majesty, being made acquainted with the affair, summoned, on the following day, the principal Rhahaans to attend his council, and submitted to them, whether or not it was consistent with Birman tenets, to grant books that treated of their history and laws, to foreigners. The conclave, I was told, after solemn deliberation, determined in the affirmative; and added, that it was not only admissible, but laudable, for the dissemination of knowledge. His Majesty was thereupon pleased to order a

handsome copy of the Razawayn, or History of their Kings, and of the Dhermasath, or Code of Laws, to be delivered to me from the royal library: each was contained in one large volume, written in a beautiful manner, and handsomely adorned with painting and gilding.

My Bengal draftsman, whose labours were principally dictated by Dr. Buchanan in the delineation of plants, met at Ummerapoora with a brother artist in a Siamese painter, who was employed by the court. This man, though not so skilful as the person in my service, was nevertheless of much utility; he furnished me with several drawings, descriptive of the costume of the country, which, though executed with little taste, were finished with the most perfect fidelity;

among other things, he brought me a representation of the Shoepaundogee, or royal barge used by the King when he goes in state on the water; the painter reported, that the length of the vessel was a hundred cubits (more than one hundred and fifty feet): I saw it through a glass, but at too great a distance to observe more than the elevated stern, the royal piasath in the centre, which occupied the place of a mast, and the splendour of the gilding, with which it was entirely covered. The King possesses a great variety of boats: some of them we had an opportunity of viewing, but the Shoepaundogee is by far the most magnificent.

The Birman month of Sandaingguite, which had just expired, is a season of universal festivity and rejoicing, and on the three terminating days solemn ho-

mage is paid to the King, to the Engy Teekien, and to the principal Queen. At the court of the latter, all the wives and daughters of the nobles pay their respects, unaccompanied by their husbands or any male attendants; and in this assembly as much state and ceremony are observed as at the court of his Majesty. The rank, which each lady bears in right of her husband, is expressed by her dress and ornaments; female priority being not less scrupulously maintained, than precedency amongst men. We regretted extremely, that their customs did not allow us to attend the Queen's court, in the same manner as that of her illustrious mother. Age and widowhood, it seems, gave the latter a privilege of receiving visits from the other sex, without violating decorum, or incurring reproach.

During the fifteen days of this "de-"creasing moon," the city was illuminated every night; lanterns made of different coloured transparent paper were suspended from bamboo scaffolds, and disposed in various shapes, which produced a pleasing effect when seen from our residence on the opposite side of the lake. The superior brilliancy of the lights at the palace was distinguishable above the rest. The Birmans are singularly expert in the display of fire-works of every description.

On the 13th of October, I received a verbal message from the Engy Teekien, that he should be glad to see me on the following day, when he meant to lay aside the parade of state, and honour me with an unceremonious reception. I embraced with pleasure an opportunity of an

interview unincumbered with the formalities of regal pomp, and, accompanied by a few attendants, proceeded on horseback to his palace at the appointed time. As soon as my arrival was announced, I was immediately introduced without the previous ceremony of waiting in the Rhoom. On this occasion he did not, as formerly, exhibit himself from a casement window like a pagod, but was seated at the upper end of the hall, upon a couch richly adorned with the customary ornaments. His dress was very simple; he wore a white vest of fine muslin, with a lower garment of silk, and his head was bound with an embroidered fillet. Several personages of rank were present, habited also in a plain manner, but distinguished by their gold tzaloe, or chain of nobility. The deportment of the prince at this interview was perfectly

frank, and free from ostentation; I was disappointed, however, in his conversation; I expected that he would, by inquiring into the state of the British provinces, and the causes of their prosperity, have sought for information that might hereafter prove beneficial to the country over which he is one day presumptively to reign. His discourse took a quite different turn; he asked only frivolous questions, and endeavoured to amuse me by the prattle of two sprightly children, his daughters. Half an hour having been spent in this trifling manner, I withdrew, and paid a visit to the Maywoon of Pegue, who told me that it was his intention to accompany us back to Rangoon, where he would order every necessary to be provided for our convenience and accommodation.

The distance to which our boats were obliged to remove, rendered the transportation of our baggage a work of labour: after conveying it across the lake, it was to be laden on carts, and drawn for two miles over what was now a plain of sand, but at the time of our arrival had been a wide sheet of water, navigated by vessels of considerable burthen. The communication between the lakc and the river was now completely closed.

On the 23d of October we began to send off our heaviest articles. The commissary, or Kyewoon, had taken care to provide a carriage and labourers, the expence of which we were not suffered to defray; what I gave to the people, was considered as a private gratification.

Having embarked most of our baggage,

Mr. Wood and Dr. Buchanan, with a proportion of the attendants, left me early on the 25th, to go on board the boats: I remained until evening waiting for some papers which I expected from the city. Horses were in readiness for us to mount, on the opposite side of the lake.

On leaving Tounzemahn, as the boat pushed from the shore, I looked back with pleasure at the grove, under the shade of which we had resided, and bade a glad but not unthankful adieu to an habitation where I had experienced kind hospitality, and spent three months in a manner that could not fail to impress me with a lasting recollection of the scene. To be placed in so singular and interesting a situation, cannot often occur; nor can the images created by it be easily obliterated from the mind.

Riding across the plain over which I had lately sailed, I perceived that part of it was already under tillage, but the largest portion was left for pasture. During the inundation, canoes navigated between the houses of the lower suburbs of the city, and all communication was maintained by water; but carts now plied in dusty lanes, and the foundations of the buildings were at least fifteen feet above the level of the river. Our boats were at a creek called Sakyingua, where a number of trading vessels were also moored, some of them of considerable burthen. The noise of the boat-men on the bank, and the smoke from the fires which they made, rendered the situation by no means agreeable.

Various causes conspired to detain us at Sakyingua Creek until the 29th. In the

interval, I received a short letter from the principal Woongee, directed to the Governor-General of India, containing a desire of the King to procure certain religious books written in the Shanscrit language; likewise that a Bramin, well versed in astronomy, might be sent from Bengal to his court, to instruct his own professors, of whose ignorance in that science his Majesty was fully sensible. The letter, however, laid as much stress on the purity of the preceptor's cast as on the extent of his knowledge, and comprehended a curious addition to the request, that a Bramin woman should accompany the sage, with a view, I imagine, of propagating a race of hereditary astronomers. I informed the Woongee, in reply, that Bramins of learning have an invincible dislike to leave their native country, even for a limited period; but

to emigrate with their families, I conceived, was an act to which no temptation would induce them: I added, that the principles of the English government did not allow of force being used, to compel a subject into exile, who had not by any crime forfeited the protection of the law. This, I dare say, was not very intelligible doctrine to the despotic monarch of Ava, and at all events must have been perfectly novel.

Whilst we remained at this place, one of our people received ill treatment from the natives, which was remarkable, as being the first instance that had occurred. Dr. Buchanan, desirous of enriching his collection of plants with every rare production of the country, used to employ a peasant boy of Bengal to gather herbs for him, whom he every day sent for that

purpose into the fields. The followers of the Prince of Tongho happened to reside in this quarter, a class of men notorious among Birmans for their insolence and dishonesty: the lad unluckily chanced one day to meet a party of these ruffians, who took from him his knife, basket, and turban, and, threatening to put him to death, so frightened him that he botanized no more till we were out of their reach. I had before heard much of the ferocity of these people, who were very numerous; report made their numbers ten thousand: they were always quarrelling with the followers of the other princes, particularly those of the Prince of Prome. It was said, that the King had on one occasion, whilst we were at Ummerapoora, sharply reprimanded his son, the Tongho Teekien, and confined his Woon, or minister, for not keeping his people in better subjection.

I took no notice of their conduct; it was not expedient at my departure to make a public complaint of such a petty outrage.

The river, which three months before had displayed an uninterrupted expanse of several miles, was now broken into separate streams, surrounding numerous islands, which had just emerged from the inundation. The principal branch of the river, even in its diminished state, was a mile wide. Dr. Buchanan and I crossed in a small boat to an island where some fishermen and gardeners had begun to erect huts, in which they reside until returning floods in the ensuing year force them to abandon their habitations. They seemed to have the means of comfortable livelihood; their gardens were already sown with the sweet potatoe, convolvulus batatas, pulse, and brenjals, solanum

melongena; the latter are usually transplanted. The soil was extremely dry, notwithstanding it had so recently been covered with water, and the pasturage was luxuriant. The inhabitants possessed cattle and poultry in abundance, and doubtless were supplied with excellent fish.

Early on the 29th, the Maywoon of Pegue visited me, in a very handsome war-boat gilded to the water's edge, accompanied by several others that were plain; he invited me on board, and we took our seats on the prow, which, in Birman boats, is always the place of dignity. When we left the shore, the whole fleet pushed off and followed us; the morning was fine, and the water smooth, whilst the spires of Ummerapoora in our stern, the white temples and lofty hills of

Chagaing opposite, and the fort of ancient Ava below, formed a very cheerful prospect. We rowed to Chagaing, where, soon after our arrival, the Maywoon took leave of me, to return to the capital, having business to detain him a few days longer; he, however, promised to overtake us on the way down, his boats being better adapted than ours for expedition.

After dinner, Doctor Buchanan and I walked out to view the fort of Chagaing, which in the days of Namdoo Praw had been the seat of empire: we entered under a gateway, the arch of which was wide and well turned. This fort had nothing to distinguish it from others that have been already described; it was not nearly so large as that of Ummerapoora, or even equal in extent to the lines of ancient Ava; the defences were suffered

to fall into ruins, and the houses were meanly built among weeds and rubbish. We observed a well supplied herb market, which was attended wholly by women. Passing through the fort, we crossed a narrow fosse on a handsome wooden bridge, the length of which indicated, that during the monsoon the inundation extended to a considerable distance; and a little farther, we came to the great road leading to Meengoung. On our right, lay the low conical hills, whose summits, crowned with white temples, form such conspicuous objects from the river. Advancing about a mile, we arrived at a village called Oderua, or Pot Village, from its being a manufactory of earthen ware. The lateness of the evening prevented our further progress. We returned by a road that led to the left of the fort, pass-

ing in our way a neat village situated near the banks of the river.

By means of our horses, we now enjoyed a convenience which in coming up we did not possess. A platform had been constructed in a broad boat, capable of containing five horses: we brought three from the capital, and added two others on the way down: little trouble was occasioned by embarking or landing them; the Birman grooms were expert, and the beasts tractable. Early next morning we mounted, and pursued the route of the preceding evening. Numerous temples lined the road on either side, but one only of the number attracted particular notice; it was surrounded by a high brick wall, from which elephants heads, formed of masonry, were protruded in such a man-

ner as to give the wall an appearance of being supported on the backs of those animals; the temple was a pyramid of brick, about one hundred feet high, ornamented with a gilded umbrella. Passing through Pot Village, we came to a town called Kyeock Zeit, remarkable for being the great manufactory of marble idols, the inhabitants of which were statuaries by trade. I saw thirty or forty large yards crowded with artists at work on images of various sizes, but all of the same personage, Gaudma, sitting cross-legged on a pedestal. The quarries, whence the materials are procured, are only a few miles distant; the marble is brought hither in shapeless blocks; and after being fashioned, the images are publicly sold to those who have grace enough to purchase them. The largest that I observed, a little exceeded the human size, the price

of which, they said, was one hundred tackals, twelve or thirteen pounds, but some diminutive Gaudmas were to be disposed of, as low as two or three tackals. The Leedegee or steersman of my boat, bought one to protect us on the way down. The workmen were extremely civil and communicative; they would not part with their sacred commodity, I was told, to any except Birmans; but they answered our questions with good humour; and our curiosity neither excited surprise, nor gave umbrage. Their tools are simple; they shape the image with a chisel and mallet, and afterwards smooth it by freestone and water. Many of the idols were beautifully polished, which, I understood, was effected by rubbing the marble with three different sorts of stone; the first rough, the second finer, and the third such as

hones are made of, the workmen afterwards use the palms of their hands. This operation gives it a transparent clearness, far surpassing the brightest polish of which European marble is susceptible. Such images as were designed for gilding did not receive so high a finishing.

Half a league further we came to where the temple of Kommodoo rears its massive and antique pile. This venerable and curious edifice stands on an eminence, which renders it a conspicuous object at the distance of many miles. It is composed of solid masonry without cavity of any sort, and in shape resembles a bell; there is a high railing of wood encircling it, twelve feet distant from the base; the circumference on the outside of the railing, by my measurement, was four hundred paces, perhaps three hundred and fifty

yards, and the height did not appear less than three hundred feet; it ended in a clumsy cone, unadorned by a spire or the customary umbrella, and exhibited a striking contrast to the elegant and still larger temple of Shoemadoo; indeed, the style of its structure indicated, that it was built either by a people possessing totally different notions of architecture, or at a far more remote period; it was much the most inelegant and heavy building that we had seen in the country. The roof had once been richly gilded, and the remains of wooden galleries, from which the paint and gilding were not quite obliterated, lay scattered around; these ornaments had probably been often renewed since the first erection of the temple. Kommodoo was once celebrated for its sanctity, and is still held in great reverence; many devotees were sauntering

round the hill, whilst others were prostrate at their devotions. The Birmans boast of the antiquity of this building; they ascribe its rise to supernatural agency, and fix its date further back than the Mosaic æra: these, however, were the tales of ignorance, to conceal the want of knowledge; but the traces of long duration were certainly evident, and from its size and form Kommodoo Praw seems likely to resist the effects of time for many ages.

From the site of Kommodoo, we had an extended view of the river winding through a rich and level country. A considerable lake lay to the southward; the plains were now cultivating, whilst numerous villages and herds of cattle denoted population and plenty. At a short distance from the foot of the hill was a

long avenue formed by a double row of tamarind trees of uncommon stateliness and beauty, under the shade of which a line of shops was erected on either side, where, besides provisions and cloth, utensils in brass-ware, and fireworks, were sold. On a green, a little way retired from the road, we observed a number of people employed in making rockets, the tubes of which were the solid trunks of trees bored after the manner of a pump; in some, the cavity of the cylinder was nine or ten inches in diameter, and the wood about two inches thick; the length of these tubes varied from twelve to twenty feet; they were filled with a composition of charcoal, saltpetre, and gunpowder, rammed in very hard. The enormous size of Birman rockets has already been noticed, in the account given of the fireworks of Pegue; but several

that we saw here, far exceeded those in magnitude. The large ones are fired from a high scaffold erected for the purpose; bamboos fastened together, of a length adapted to preserve the poise, form the tail of the rocket; in this branch of pyrotechny the Birmans take particular delight, and are extremely skilful.

The day was now far advanced, and the sun become powerful. Having satisfied our curiosity, we galloped back to our boats, a distance of about seven miles. I took notice, in my way, of frequent sheds built at the side of the road, in which pots of water were placed for the refreshment of travellers.

Chagaing is the principal emporium to which cotton is brought from all parts of the country, and where, after being

cleaned, it is embarked for the China market: females perform the labour of clearing it from the seeds; this is effected by double cylinders turned by a lathe, which the woman works with her foot, whilst she supplies the cotton with her hands. I was told, that the most opulent merchant in the empire resides at Chagaing, who deals solely in this article. In the afternoon we loosed our boats and dropped down to Ava on the opposite side.

Early on the following morning, I walked out to examine the ruins of this deserted capital. The disposition of its streets and buildings nearly resembled that of Ummerapoora at the present day. We could trace the separate divisions of the palace, amidst heaps of rubbish overgrown by weeds and thorns: on the spot

where but a few years since the Lotoo stood, and justice was administered to a mighty empire, pulse and Indian corn were now growing. Passing to the westward, among ruinous walls and fallen temples, we came upon a good road, and a miserable old woman, " the sad historian" and living emblem of the place, pointed out the way to Logatherpoo Praw, formerly the residence of the Seredaw, or high priest of the empire, where the colossal image of Gaudma was still to be viewed.

The area on which the temple stands, is a square surrounded by an arcade of masonry; on each side, nine cubical towers are erected, and several buildings are comprehended within the space inclosed by the arcade. The temple in which the stupendous idol is placed, dif-

fers from the other pyramidical buildings, by having an arched excavation that contains the image. On entering this dome, our surprise was greatly excited at beholding such a monstrous representation of the divinity. It was a Gaudma of marble seated on a pedestal, in its customary position. The height of the idol, from the top of the head to the pedestal on which it sat, was nearly twenty-four feet; the head was eight feet in diameter, and across the breast it measured ten; the hands were from five to six feet long; the pedestal, which was also of marble, was raised eight feet from the ground. The neck and the left side of the image were gilded, but the right arm and shoulder remained uncovered. The Birmans asserted, that this, like every other Gaudma which I had seen of the same material, was composed of one entire

block of marble; nor could we, on the closest inspection, observe any junction of parts. If what they said was true, it remains a matter of much curiosity, to discover how such a ponderous mass could be transported from its native bed, and raised in this place. The building had evidently been erected over the idol, as the entrance would scarcely admit the introduction of the head. No intelligent Birman happening to be with us, all that I could learn in answer to my inquiries, was, that the image had been placed there an hundred years ago, by a King named Podoo Sembuan. Whatever may be its real history, it is an extraordinary specimen of idolatrous extravagance.

On our return, we perceived a man driving a cart drawn by a pair of oxen, which was filled with rubbish from the

ruined buildings. I learnt that he was carrying the load to a neighbouring brook to wash it, expecting to discover gold, silver, or some article of value, which not unfrequently happened. Old Ava is said to be the resort of numerous thieves, who find shelter and places of concealment among the decayed religious edifices.

Our researches being ended, we re-embarked and immediately got under way, the boatmen using their oars with just sufficient force to accelerate in a slight degree our motion down a gently gliding current. The river, except in those places where islands divided its stream, was above a mile wide. A little before sun set, we brought-to for the night on the left hand, under a high bank near the town of Sandaht, and in the evening we

took our customary walk, which at this place was among lanes, separated by hedge-rows, inclosing fields planted with pulse, sesamum, and Indian corn.

We left Sandaht betimes the next morning, and continued to float down the stream, with little exertion or labour to our people. The river having fallen at least fifteen feet since the time we came up, we could not, as before, observe the towns and villages on each side, nor indeed could any object be seen that was not immediately on the edge of the banks, which hung perpendicularly over the river, in many places to a considerable height; but we knew when a town or a collection of houses was nigh, by the steps that were cut in the bank for the convenience of fetching water. About four o'clock we passed the place where the Keenduem

unites with the Irrawaddy. The mouth of the former did not seem to be much diminished by the change of season. We brought-to in the evening, on the east side, in the neighbourhood of a poor village, a short way below Tirroup Mew, where the country presented a cheerful aspect; grass was growing, and cattle feeding in every direction.

On the following day, November 2d, we continued to travel in the same tranquil manner, the current of the river flowing two or three miles an hour with an unruffled surface. The weather was serene, and the temperature of the air moderate. Abundance of water-fowl, collected on the sands which had recently emerged from the inundation, afforded us good shooting. As we approached the city of Nioundoh, I made inquiry con-

cerning the excavations in the banks, which formerly had been the retreats of hermits, and was told that no person would now venture to explore them, as they had become the habitations of innumerable snakes and other noxious reptiles. We brought-to in the evening among a fleet of at least two hundred large trading boats, which were moored at the bank, waiting to deliver or receive a lading. Nioundoh is a place of much commerce, having usurped all the trade that formerly was carried on at Pagahm: cotton, japanned ware, and oil extracted from sesamum, are the principal articles of exportation. The land adjacent to the town did not wear a more fertile aspect than when we passed it four months before; no change of season could effect an alteration in its barren soil; but on the opposite bank of the river, rich crops were

waving, and cattle grazing in luxuriant pasture.

Early on the following day we left Nioundoh, and reached Pagahm by breakfast time. Although the distance by land is so short that Nioundoh may be called the modern appendage to ancient Pagahm, yet we were above two hours between them, owing to the circuitous course of the river, which lengthens the way to eight or nine miles.

Mention of Pagahm has often occurred in this narrative, a city celebrated for its numerous temples, and the traces which it bears of former magnificence. To examine its extensive and various ruins with the accuracy of a speculative traveller, would have occupied more time than we had to spare. Shortly after the fleet had

brought-to, I was visited by the Mioudogee, or the person who governed the town and district in the absence of the prince; he informed me, that his royal master was expected on the following day from Ummerapoora. In the afternoon we walked out to view a very curious and ancient temple, which was repairing at the expence of the Engy Teekien, or prince royal. It was built of masonry, and comprehended several arches forming separate domes, into which four arched porches led, that faced the four cardinal points; on each side of the doors, in recesses in the wall, were seated gigantic human figures made of stucco, with large staring eyes, and the head protruded forward, as if to look at those who approached the threshold. These, I was told, were the supernatural porters of the doors, whose power of perception was

such, that they could penetrate the recesses of the human breast, and discover the sincerity of devotion. The Mioudogee observed, that it was the prince's intention to gild this temple; and that four viss of gold, about the value of six hundred pounds, were already prepared for that purpose; he added, that a considerable sum of silver had been expended on the repairs.

We were on this occasion informed of a circumstance that shews how easily an art, once well known, may be lost to a country from disuse and the capriciousness of fashion; notwithstanding that well-formed arches of brick are still to be seen in many of the ancient temples, yet Birman workmen can no longer turn them. Masonry has not in latter ages been much practised; wooden buildings

have superseded the more solid structures of brick and mortar.

On our return, the Mioudogee politely invited us to stop and rest ourselves at his house. We accepted the invitation, and were ushered into a commodious dwelling inclosed by a railing; where we found several persons seated in a spacious hall. Soon after our entrance, the Mioudogee's wife came forth from an inner apartment, and sat down by her husband; she was attended by two female servants, and held by the hand her daughter, a pretty delicate child about eight years of age, who was not at all alarmed at the sight of strangers, but came and examined my hat and epaulette with much engaging familiarity. Her father was extremely civil; not knowing that we had horses, he kindly offered us the use of his, if we

chose to remain another day, and amuse ourselves by riding through the ancient city, which was too extensive to be traversed in so short a time on foot. Doctor Buchanan having expressed a wish to examine the Launzan, a rare species of plant, he promised to send one of his people on the following day, some distance off, to procure it for him, which he punctually performed. Such instances of genuine hospitality are amongst the highest gratifications that a traveller can experience.

Next morning we mounted our horses at an early hour, pursuing an eastward direction, on a road that led to hills called Torroendong, about ten miles distant, beyond which, and more southerly, we perceived Poupa, a conical mountain mentioned in our former journey. On each side of the road, innumerable religious

buildings appeared, in every stage of dilapidation. At the distance of two or three miles from the river, the soil became less barren. A few inconsiderable gardens were inclosed by the inhabitants, sown chiefly with Indian corn and pulse, and in some places the cotton plant was growing. We continued our ride five or six miles, as far as a small village named Minangdoo, where the ruins seem to end in that direction. There I saw for the first time a Kioum, or monastery, built of masonry. We got back about twelve o'clock, and found crowds of people assembled at the water side, waiting for the arrival of the Prince of Pagahm, who was hourly expected: all the men of distinction belonging to the city had gone up the river to meet him. In order to make more room near the spot where he was to land, we loosed our boats, and removed to

a situation lower down. Shortly after the fleet came in sight. We were at too great a distance to distinguish the prince's barge, the decorations of which were said to be very handsome; but we saw an immense number of boats, and heard the shouts of the people, who welcomed their royal governor with every demonstration of joy.

Being unacquainted with the etiquette proper to be observed on such an occasion, I consulted the Mioudogee, whether a visit from me was expected, or would be agreeable to the prince. He replied, that my paying a visit would lay the prince under the necessity of desiring our stay for two or three days, to partake of an entertainment. As such a ceremony could not be convenient to him, and had no inducement for me, I sent Baba-Sheen

to apologize in my name, pleading haste and the lateness of the season as my excuse for not having the honour to wait on him.

At sun-rise next morning, the prince of Prome passed by, with a very numerous and noisy retinue; from the number of boats there could not be fewer than three or four thousand persons: all the boatmen were singing in unison with the strokes of their oars. The Maywoon of Pegue, who was in his suite, sent me a complimentary message, saying that he meant to attend the prince as far as Meeaday, his own Jaghire, or estate, where he should wait our arrival.

We were delayed at Pagahm, by our boat people, till near ten o'clock, when we pushed off. The river, during the

early part of this day, where islands of sand did not intervene, was not less than two miles wide: at one place, however, the channel contracted, and the current rushed round a projecting rock, with excessive rapidity. We saw several ranges of hills, some of which approached near the river, but these were of no considerable magnitude. The Arracan mountains, fifty or sixty miles distant, which were visible at intervals, towered high above the rest. In the evening we reached Sillamew, an ancient city which had once been a place of considerable note. A little way to the northward, we perceived the ruins of a brick fort erected in a very judicious situation; the ditch and wall were still to be traced. We had been so much engaged, when we were here before, with the silk and cotton merchants who brought their goods to sell,

that we entirely overlooked the site of this fortress; an oversight that might easily happen, as its ramparts and towers are nearly level with the dust.

CHAPTER XIX.

Arrive at Sembewghewn.—Politeness of the Maywoon of Arracan.—Yanangheoum.—Wells of Petroleum.——Patanago.——Meeaday—Friendly Attention of the Maywoon of Pegue.—Kayn, or Mountaineers.—Strange Custom.—Notions of Religion. Pulloo.—Prome.—Visit the Site of an Ancient City.—Peeinghee.—Mayahoun.—Prejudice of Birman Boat-men.—Disagreeable Circumstance.—Western River.—Denoobew.—Enter the Rangoon Branch of the Irrawaddy.—Mosquetoes.—Meet Captain Thomas.—Arrive at Rangoon.

WE departed from Sillahmew at the customary hour, and by nine o'clock in the morning reached Sembewghewn on the east bank of the river. The town is a league inland, but there is a village at

the place where boats usually stop. We perceived a temporary house at some distance, such as is built for the accommodation of a man of rank when he travels, surrounded by small huts; and were informed that it was the encampment of the governor of Arracan. This officer had been newly appointed, and was on his way to take possession of his viceroyalty, which confers the title of Maywoon on the possessor, and is accounted one of the most important governments of the empire. I sent a message to him with compliments, and a request that he would forward a dispatch for me to Chittagong, the frontier British province that borders on Arracan. He obligingly undertook the commission, and punctually fulfilled his promise. I had afterwards the satisfaction to know that the first advice which the Governor-General received

of my proceedings at Ummerapoora, was by this conveyance.

We continued at Sembewghewn only a short time. I did not land; but the Doctor went on shore: he saw nothing, however, that merited particular notice. Mr. Wood remained till the afternoon, to observe the distance between the sun and moon; the latter being at this time visible, and the sky unclouded. We rowed till two o'clock, at which hour we reached Yaynangheoum, or Petroleum creek; a place already noticed in our journey up the river.

Doctor Buchanan partook of an early dinner with me; and when the sun had descended so low as to be no longer inconvenient, we mounted our horses to visit the celebrated wells that produce the

oil, an article of universal use throughout the Birman empire. The face of the country was cheerless and sterile; the road, which wound among rocky eminences, was barely wide enough to admit the passage of a single cart; and in many places the track in which the wheels must run was a foot and a half lower on one side than the other: there were several of these lanes, some more circuitous than others, according to the situation of the small hills among which they led. Vehicles, going and returning, were thus enabled to pursue different routes, except at particular places where the nature of the ground would only admit of one road: when a cart came to the entrance of such a defile, the driver hallooed out to stop any that might interfere with him from the opposite side, no part being sufficiently wide for two carts to pass

The hills, or rather hillocks, were covered with gravel, and yielded no other vegetation than a few stunted bushes. The wheels had worn ruts deep into the rock, which seemed to be rather a mass of concreted gravel, than hard stone, and many pieces of petrified wood lay strewed about. It is remarkable, that wherever these petrifactions were found, the soil was unproductive, and the ground destitute of verdure. The evening being far advanced, we met but few carts; those which we did observe were drawn each by a pair of oxen, and of a length disproportionate to the breadth, to allow space for the earthen pots that contained the oil. It was a matter of surprise to us, how they could convey such brittle ware, with any degree of safety, over so rugged a road: each pot was packed in a separate basket, and laid on straw;

notwithstanding which precaution, the ground all the way was strewed with the fragments of the vessels, and wet with oil; for no care can prevent the fracture of some in every journey. As we approached the pits, which were more distant than we had imagined, the country became less uneven, and the soil produced herbage; it was nearly dark when we reached them, and the labourers had retired from work. There seemed to be a great many pits within a small compass: walking to the nearest, we found the aperture about four feet square, and the sides as far as we could see down were lined with timber; the oil is drawn up in an iron pot, fastened to a rope passed over a wooden cylinder, which revolves on an axis supported by two upright posts. When the pot is filled, two men take the rope by the end, and run down a decli-

vity, which is cut in the ground, to a distance equivalent to the depth of the well: thus, when they reach the end of their track, the pot is raised to its proper elevation; the contents, water and oil together, are then discharged into a cistern, and the water is afterwards drawn off through a hole at the bottom. Our guide, an active intelligent fellow, went to a neighbouring house and procured a well rope, by means of which we were enabled to measure the depth, and ascertained it to be thirty-seven fathoms, but of the quantity of oil at the bottom we could not judge: the owner of the rope, who followed our guide, affirmed, that when a pit yielded as much as came up to the waist of a man, it was deemed tolerably productive; if it reached to his neck, it was abundant; but that which rose no higher than the knee was accounted indifferent.

When a well is exhausted, they restore the spring by cutting deeper into the rock, which is extremely hard in those places where the oil is produced. Government farm out the ground that supplies this useful commodity; and it is again let to adventurers who dig wells at their own hazard, by which they sometimes gain, and often lose, as the labour and expence of digging are considerable. The oil is sold on the spot for a mere trifle; I think two or three hundred pots for a tackal, or half-a-crown. The principal charge is incurred by the transportation and purchase of vessels. We had but half gratified our curiosity when it grew dark, and our guide urged us not to remain any longer, as the road was said to be infested by tigers, that prowled at night among the rocky uninhabited ways, through which we had to pass. We fol-

lowed his advice, and returned, with greater risk, as I thought, of breaking our necks from the badness of the road, than of being devoured by wild beasts. At ten o'clock we reached our boats without any misadventure.

We left Yaynangheoum before sunrise, and, committing ourselves to the current, glided almost imperceptibly down the stream, the boatmen lying in idle ease, some on the roof, and others on the lateral platforms of the vessel; whilst their only occupation was singing, praying, and sleeping by turns. The present manner of passing their time, was a contrast to what they experienced on the former journey, during which their labour had been excessive and without intermission; they all appeared pleased to return to Rangoon, where the necessaries of life are

much cheaper than at the capital. We lay this night near the town of Patanago, a place already noticed. Walking out in the afternoon, I started several hares: the country abounds in game, and is beautifully diversified with hanging woods and rising grounds.

The fleet parted from Patanago very early. Doctor Buchanan's boat going ahead of the rest, he reached Loonghee half an hour before his companions, and, profiting by his celerity, went on shore at this romantic spot, where we had passed several days on our journey upwards. He walked to some distance, in the hope of finding fruit on a tree which about four months before he had left in the earliest stage of blossom; but the fruit had since that time ripened and decayed, and the tree was now putting forth fresh flowers.

Between this place and Meeaday, there are several ridges of low hills, clothed with wood and destitute of cultivation, which my people said were the haunts of numerous tigers and elephants. At sunset we got to Meeaday and perceived a number of boats fastened to the bank below the town, and among others we distinguished that of the Maywoon of Pegue: I immediately sent a message to his house, notifying our arrival, and in return received a civil reply, expressing a desire to see me.

On the following morning, about nine o'clock, a nephew of the Maywoon came down to welcome us: after conversing some time, I walked with him to visit his relation, by whom I was received with every demonstration of friendship: he politely asked me to remain at Meeaday

for a day or two, and visit his garden and country house; but as the season was advanced, I felt solicitous to avoid unnecessary delay, and therefore excused myself: in fact, our stay would have put him to an inconvenience, having business, he said, to adjust on his estate, which would employ him for several days, but he expected to arrive at Rangoon as soon as ourselves. On my expressing a desire to see some of the mountaineers called Kayn, he obligingly offered to send one of his attendants to a village a few miles off, inhabited by these people, with directions to bring some of them for our inspection, dressed in the proper garb of their country. I understood from him that, since our departure from Ummerapoora, not less than 50,000 persons had left that city in the train of the several princes and men of rank, who, after pay-

ing homage at the golden feet, had returned to their respective governments. When I took leave, he ordered a pair of horses to be brought from his stable, and requested my acceptance of them; they were very handsome, and one was of an uncommon colour, having a number of circular black spots on a milk white skin. In return, I presented him with a marquee made of European canvas, lined with English broad cloth, and my rifle-barrelled gun, which I more highly valued.

In the evening I walked over grounds which I had often trod before. Every thing in this district seemed to be flourishing; the peasants and farmers acknowledge in the Maywoon a mild and beneficent landlord; if they were not so opulent as some, they were not so poor as many others: content, I thought, shone

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in every countenance, and comfort appeared to be an inmate of every dwelling. In my walks I saw a good deal of game, and shot a henza, or Braminy goose. The natives, although it is the symbol of their nation, hold the bird in no estimation: it is somewhat larger than a barnacle; the plumage is beautiful, but the flesh indifferent.

Next morning, on my return from a long ride, I found a number of people collected on the banks opposite to our boats; these, I learned, were the Kayn, or mountaineers, with their conductors, for whom the Maywoon had sent on the preceding day. I desired that the principal man and woman should be brought on board. This curious couple were dressed in their best attire, consisting of an ill shaped sleeved coat made of coarse

black cotton cloth; that of the man was much shorter than the woman's; both were bordered with stripes of white, red, and yellow; the man had a belt over his right shoulder, from which was suspended a pouch, ornamented with strings and small shells; on their heads they wore fillets nearly in the Birman manner; to the woman's were fastened tassels, composed of the Calyptra of the Buprestis ignita; she had also decorated her neck and arms with many strings of beads and cowries; but the most remarkable part was her face, which was tattowed all over in lines mostly describing segments of circles. This ceremony, which in some other countries is performed on the parts of women not publicly exposed, among the Kayn is confined wholly to the visages of their females, to which, in the eye of an unaccustomed beholder, it gives a most

extraordinary appearance; the aspect of the woman, though she was not old, nor in other respects ugly, from the effect of the operation was truly hideous. I asked the origin of the custom; this they did not know, but said it had existed from time immemorial, and that it was invariably performed on every female at a certain age. I immediately employed my painter to make a drawing of these singular figures, in the attitude in which they stood before me: a task which he performed in two hours, with great exactness, and drew striking resemblances. There was some difficulty in taking a likeness of the man, who was alarmed and restless, from a supposition that we were imposing magical spells upon him; but the woman stood still with her hands crossed, apparently in perfect good humour and content: they spoke the Birman language

indifferently, and, in order to engage their attention, we asked the man several questions, where he expected to go when he died? He replied, that he should again become a child. Who will make you a child? "The Mounzing." Who are the Mounzing? "The father and mother of the world, who grow on the earth as two trees in a field, one ever green, the other dry." What he meant by this metaphor we could not tell, unless it was a type of successive and eternal renovation and decay. He added, that the Mounzing resided on the great mountain Gnowa, where the images of the dead are deposited. They had no idea of a place of future rewards and punishments, and deny the existence of sin in their country; they do not pray whilst living, because they cannot, in this life, see the Mounzing, but they think that their images pray to them

after mortal decease. They burn their dead, and afterwards collect their ashes in an urn, which they convey to a house, where, if the urn contain the relics of a man, they keep it six days, if of a woman, five; after which it is carried to the place of interment, and deposited in a grave, and on the sod that covers it, is laid a wooden image of the deceased, to pray to the Mounzing and protect the bones and ashes.

These are the rude notions of religion entertained by the harmless untaught race that inhabit the lofty mountains which divide Arracan from Ava, and who, as children of nature, delighting in their wild and native freedom, are for the most part insuperably averse to hold any commerce with the people of the plains. The Birmans, since the conquest of Arracan,

have compelled many, and allured a few, to settle in villages at the bases of the hills, where they are treated with a humanity that tends to conciliate them to their new and more civilized state. A large proportion of Kayn are, however, still independent. The Birmans have not yet carried sacrilegious invasion to their holy mountain, which probably is not worth acquiring. When a Kayn dies within the jurisdiction of the Birmans, the relations of the deceased always convey the urn, and the image of the departed person, to Gnowa, there to deposit them in hallowed earth. These people have no letters, nor any law, except custom; to this the Birmans prudently leave them, never interfering in their municipal and social economy.

Our curiosity being satisfied, we left

Meeaday as soon as the painter had finished the drawings. The country through which we sailed this day had a pleasing appearance; spots of cultivation and frequent towns skirted the river, while small hills clothed with trees rose behind them. We passed in our way through a flock of thirty or forty elephants, who were swimming across the river, carrying their riders on their necks; these were all females, and had been employed in hunting their own species; males are seldom used by the Birmans for that purpose. Late in the evening we brought-to at a small town called Pulloo, where there is a custom-house, having now entered the government of the Prince of Prome.

We got under way early the ensuing morning, and about two o'clock stopped at the lower suburbs of Prome, in the

midst of a great concourse of boats. Landing our horses, we rode in the evening to view the site of a very ancient city, which ages ago was the residence of a dynasty of Pegue kings, before their country had submitted to the Birman yoke. On our right, we left a large temple named Shoe Sanda Praw, situated on an eminence, round the foot of which were several kioums, or monasteries; pursuing a southerly direction, we came on a level road leading through well cultivated fields, interspersed with groves of tall palmyra trees. We observed the channels of two rivers at this time almost dry, but which in the rainy season roll down an impetuous current from the mountains, and empty their waters into the Irrawaddy; by these streams, teak timber is floated from the forests during the monsoon, and is sold here very cheap.

A plank three inches thick, and from sixteen to twenty feet long, may be purchased for a tackal, or half a crown. The soil in the neighbourhood of Prome is remarkably well adapted for gardens, and we met several persons carrying loads of fruit on their heads to market. The evening was far advanced before we reached Yættee, on entering which we passed through an old gateway, that appeared to be narrower, but of greater depth, than any we had yet seen; indeed the ruinous state both of the gateway and the wall rendered it difficult to judge accurately of their dimensions; within we could distinguish nothing but houses and fields, and it was now too late to explore the antiquities of the place. Two intelligent men, whom we overtook riding along the road, informed us, that it had once been a great fortified city of a square form, each side

measuring a space equal to two miles and a half; that it had flourished for several centuries before the fall of the Pegue monarchy, and that the vestiges of the imperial palace and a large temple were still remaining.

During our ride we observed two caravans of waggons drawn up in a circular form, in the same manner as those we had remarked at Meeaday on our journey to the capital: here, however, the number of carts was much greater; one of the caravans containing not less than a hundred, which were disposed in two circles, one within the other, presenting a very formidable barrier against the assaults either of men, or of wild beasts. They were chiefly loaden with gnapee and salt fish, and had come from a town called Omow, situated on the banks of a lake,

where fish is caught in such abundance, as to constitute an article of commercial exportation. The road in this direction seemed to be well made, and much frequented. The Ledegee, or steersman, of Dr. Buchanan's boat, who had travelled by land from Prome to Rangoon, a journey of six days, said, that it was equally good the whole way. Timber and stone flags are the principal articles of export trade at Prome.

When the day broke we resumed our journey; the temperature of the air was now extremely pleasant, and the mornings and evenings cool: at sun-rise, the quicksilver in the thermometer stood at 67 degrees. In the earlier part of this day, the villages, particularly those on the east bank, had a very inviting appearance, from the orchards of plantain,

mango, and other fruit trees, with which they were surrounded. After passing Peinghee, the country assumed a rougher aspect; the river at the narrow strait where our boat had been wrecked on the way up, did not now run with such rapid violence as before. Just above Tirroup-miou, we passed a large island covered with reeds and brushwood, which the boat people said was much infested by tigers. The handsome town of Kainggain was situated below it: we continued our course till after dark, and passing the lights of the long and populous city of Mayahoun, formerly Loonzay, brought-to at the west bank, a little to the southward of the town; but it was too late to think of landing.

Next morning (Nov. 13th) we put off, at an early hour. In the middle of the

preceding night I had been alarmed by a scene of discord between the boatmen and my people, which had nearly produced serious consequences. The Birmans have a superstitious abhorrence of any person's passing over them when they are asleep; it is deemed a great indignity, as well as injurious from the apprehended effects of supernatural agency. The boatmen usually slept either on the roof of the boat, or on the platform projecting from the sides, whilst my people occupied the inner part. It happened that in the night, one of the soldiers went out on the platform, and, regardless of the Birmans who were taking their rest, stepped over them without ceremony, most likely ignorant of their prejudice, and perhaps half asleep himself: one of the Birmans, however, chanced unluckily to be awake, who, jumping up, instantly attacked the of-

fender with his fists; a scuffle ensued, attended with no small outcry; the other Birmans rose, and armed themselves with the bamboos that were kept for oar handles; the soldiers flew to their bayonets, and my servants were preparing to take their part. In this state of hostility I came among them, just time enough to prevent mischief. The Seree of Rangoon and the Ledegee at length pacified the enraged crew, and I ordered my own people to return to their births. This accident produced no future enmity, and it was the only disagreement that occurred. The Birmans, though sometimes irascible, were in general extremely good tempered, and seldom refused to accommodate the colars (strangers), even at the expence of their own convenience.

We rowed all this day through a

country not so well cultivated or so thickly inhabited as that we had passed on the preceding: a little below Shainwah, a considerable branch of the river takes a south-westerly course, leading, we were informed, to Bassien; it is called Keidowa, and sometimes Anou Kioup, or the Western River: the Arracan mountanis were visible in the north-west quarter. We brought-to after dark, a little above Henzadah, under a reedy bank, from which we were invaded by myriads of troublesome insects.

The following day brought us, without any remarkable incident, to Denoobew. The high bank and beautiful situation of Terriato or Mango village, on the west side, tempted me to go on shore. It is a charming spot; the town is inconsiderable, but the houses are neat and commodious.

Denoobew, where we arrived after sunset, is distinguished by a fine temple, and is also celebrated for its manufactory of mats, which are made here in beautiful variety, and superior in quality to what are fabricated in any other part of the empire; long reeds and grass skirted the banks during the greatest part of this day's journey.

From Denoobew to Yangain Chaingah, the river preserves nearly a direct course. About ten o'clock in the morning of the 15th, we got to the entrance of the Panlang river, where it separates from the great stream. in the same manner as the Hoogly does from the Ganges; the principal branch, pursuing a southerly course, divides, as it approaches the sea, into a number of channels, which are filled by the tide, and are for the most part navi-

gable. The river we now entered is called by various names, Ashay Kioup, or the Eastern River, Panlang River, and Rangoon River, the width of which did not exceed four hundred yards. The eastern bank is within the jurisdiction of Pegue; but the opposite country is included in the province of Dalla, and is governed by a person of a much less dignified title than Maywoon. Through the high reeds which on each side overhung the water, several pathways were made leading to Carrian villages. As we passed, I perceived a watercourse, which my people said came from a lake called Mallatoo. We had now reached the place, where, in going up, we had been so severely teazed by mosquitoes, and again felt their venomous influence; they even assailed us in the day-time, and in such numbers, that we were obliged to fortify our legs with

boots, and put on thick gloves, whilst by continually flapping with an handkerchief, we endeavoured to defend our faces. But no sooner had darkness commenced, than these troublesome insects redoubled their attacks, in such multitudes, of such a size, and so poisonous, that I am persuaded if an European with a delicate skin were to be exposed uncovered to their ravages for one night, it would nearly prove fatal; even the Birman boatmen, whose skins are not easily penetrated, cannot repose within their action; and my Bengal servants actually cried out in torment. I lay in boots with my cloaths on, and a double napkin over my face, and even thus could procure no rest. About nine o'clock we anchored below the town of Panlang, being unable to stem the tide; and at eleven my people hailed a strange boat coming with the flood, that rowed

towards us. Instantly I heard an European voice, to which I had not of late been accustomed, and soon recognized that of Captain Thomas, of the Sea-Horse. I had sent an express when we were at Meeaday, to apprise him of our approach, and desire him to get ready for sea; he had learned from a small vessel that we were at hand, and came thus far to meet us. It being impossible to sleep, we passed the night in conversation; the account he gave of his treatment by the municipal government of Rangoon during my absence, and of the conduct of the Birmans in general towards his crew, was perfectly satisfactory. He had unrigged his ship during the monsoon, and covered the decks with an awning of mats, as a protection against the weather. Being in possession of a tolerably commodious house near the quay, he obligingly of-

fered me a room in it; of this I availed myself, having no intention to remain at Rangoon longer than was absolutely necessary, and hoped to limit my stay to a very few days. At midnight we got under way, and brought-to again at six in the morning: the banks on each side of the river do not indicate much cultivation in its neighbourhood; but of the state of the interior country we could not judge, being prevented by the bushes and tall reeds from seeing any distant objects. At ten o'clock the boatmen resumed their labour, and we passed on the left a very miserable village named Teetheet. We were again obliged to anchor on account of the tide, and early on the morning of the 17th of November landed at Rangoon.

CHAPTER XX.

Imperial Order registred at the Rhoom.—Reflections on our Commerce and Connection with the Birman Empire.—Receive a Visit from the Maywoon.—Account of a Carrian Village.—Birman Game of Chess.—Instance of a Trial by Ordeal.—Letter from the Maywoon to the Governor General.—Take leave.—Embark on board the Sea-Horse—Voyage to Bengal.—Conclusion.

THE Maywoon of Pegue arrived at Rangoon a few hours after we had landed. I paid him a visit on the following morning, and apprised him of my intention to sail for Bengal in a few days, when he politely said that he would continue at Rangoon until we departed. He informed me, that the orders for carrying into ef-

fect the late regulations would be publicly read and registered at the Rhoom on the following day; and he invited me to send a confidential person to be present at the ceremony; adding, that the records were always open to public inspection, and that whoever chose might at any time procure a copy, by paying a trifling fee to the officer of the court.

It may not be improper, in this stage of my narrative, to offer a few observations on the relative connection that subsists between the British possessions in India and the Birman empire; to point out the commercial objects that render the intercourse desirable, and the political necessity there is for our preserving such a degree of national influence with that government, as may enable us hereafter to counteract any attempts to diminish our

weight, or to erect an alien power that might eventually injure our interests, and even one day rival our authority. The propriety of discussing a subject of so much moment, naturally suggests itself; but a moment's reflection serves to convince us, that it ought not to be passed over in silence. It is too true, that the importance of the objects is hidden only from ourselves. Those against whom it is most incumbent on us to guard, are well apprised of their extent and magnitude; but even were it otherwise, the security which is to arise from the suppression of points of general knowledge, is fallacious and without dignity. Prudence requires that the transactions of a cabinet should not be divulged; but that policy must be very short-sighted which attempts to conceal from the world what every person may discover; the bounties of pro-

vidence, the products, resources, and local advantages of a great empire.

British India is more deeply concerned in her commerce and connection with that part of the Birman empire called Pegue, than many persons, in other respects intimately versed in the affairs of India, seem to be aware. This interest points to three distinct objects; first, to secure from that quarter regular supplies of timber for ship building, without which the British marine of India could exist but on a very contracted scale; secondly, to introduce into that country as much of our manufactures as its consumption may require, and to endeavour to find a mart in the south-west dominions of China, by means of the great river of Ava; thirdly, to guard with vigilance against every encroachment, or advance, which may be made by

foreign nations to divert the trade into other channels, and obtain a permanent settlement in a country so contiguous to the capital of our possessions. This last consideration supersedes all others in the magnitude of the consequences that might ultimately result from it.

It is impossible to impress my reader by any stronger proof with the vast importance of the Pegue trade, than briefly to state, that a durable vessel * of burthen cannot be built in the river of Bengal, except by the aid of teak plank, which is procurable from Pegue alone; and that if the timber trade with that country should by any act of power be wrested from us, if it should be lost by misfortune, or for-

* Ships have been constructed of saul wood, and of other indigenous timber of Bengal; but on trial they were not found to be serviceable.

feited through misconduct, the marine of Calcutta, which of late years has proved a source of unexampled prosperity to our principal settlement*, essentially bene-

* The following remarkable instance of public spirit will evince the advantages that have already been derived by the parent country from the marine of India, and the benefit that may in future be expected.

In the year 1794, when the horrors of impending famine aggravated the miseries of war, the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors, at the recommendation of His Majesty's ministers, transmitted by express to Lord Teignmouth, then Governor-General of India, intelligence of the calamity that threatened Great Britain, desiring whatever aid the Government of India could supply. On receipt of the dispatch, the Governor-General, with that promptitude and energy which distinguished his administration, exerted the influence of government with such effect, that 14,000 tons of shipping, almost entirely India built, were freighted to carry rice to England; and were loaden and cleared from the port of Calcutta in less than five months from the date of the arrival of the letter. This supply, with the exception of the casualties of the sea, arrived most opportunely for the relief

fited the parent country, and given honourable affluence to individuals, must be reduced nearly to annihilation, without the possibility of our being able to find any adequate substitute for the material of which we should be deprived. Within the last six years, some of the finest merchant ships ever seen in the river Thames have arrived from Calcutta *, where they

of the poor of London, and reduced the price of that excellent article of food to three halfpence a pound. So extraordinary an exertion is neither so widely known, nor so justly appreciated, as it merits. It is a circumstance which reflects the highest credit on all the parties concerned, and deserves to be recorded, in order to declare to posterity the vast resources of Great Britain, which was enabled to draw seasonable supplies of provision for the relief of the metropolis from colonies situated at the distance of nearly two thirds of the equatorial circumference of the globe.

* The Cuvera and the Gabriel, built at Calcutta of Pegue timber, are now in the river, and exhibit no

were built of teak timber; and, after delivering valuable cargoes in London, were usefully employed in the service of the state: nor would the destruction of the Pegue trade be confined solely, in its effects, to Bengal: the other settlements would sensibly share in the loss. Madras is supplied from Rangoon with timber for all the common purposes of domestic use; and even Bombay, although the coast of Malabar is its principal storehouse, finds it worth while annually to import a large quantity of planks from Pegue.

But whilst it is advantageous to us to promote the exportation of timber from the maritime towns of Pegue, it is as manifestly our interest to discourage the

contemptible specimens of the naval architecture of India. The port of Calcutta can furnish 40,000 tons of shipping.

building of ships in the Rangoon river, where the construction is facilitated by local advantages equal to those of any port in the world, and superior to most. The progress made in this art * by the Birmans has of late years been rapid, and increases in proportion as foreigners can place confidence in the Birman government. When merchants find that they can build with security in the Rangoon river, for one-third less cost than in the Ganges, and for nearly half of what they can at Bombay, few will hesitate in their choice of a place. It is said, that the ships of Pegue are not so firmly constructed as those built in our ports, and in general

* The Superb, a very fine ship, which was on the stocks when I was at Rangoon, has lately delivered a valuable cargo in the river Thames; the Laurestone also, a vessel of considerable force, which, I believe, was taken into the French line during the last war, was constructed at the same port.

this assertion is true; but the defect does not arise from the want of materials, but because the owners were speculative adventurers, without sufficient funds to defray the charges of labour and of iron, in which material Pegue ships have, by fatal experience, been found deficient. The shipwrights, however, are as expert as any workmen of the East; and their models, which are all from France, are excellent: the detriment, therefore, that arises to us from the construction of ships at Rangoon, is not less evident than the benefit that we derive from importing the unmanufactured material. The Birmans, sagaciously knowing their own interest, set us an example of policy, by remitting all duty on cordage, canvas, and wrought iron, provided these articles are, *bona fide*, brought for the equipment of a new vessel; the port charges also are not exacted

from a new ship, on leaving the river to proceed on her first voyage. A conduct on their part so wise, suggests to us the expediency of adopting some measures for our own interest; an alien duty, or a modified disqualification, would, probably, like the acts of parliament in aid of British navigation, prove the most effectual remedy. Trade cannot be prosecuted in the Indian seas to any extent, except with British ports: many objections, it is true, may be made to such a proposition; but the good resulting to us would be immediate and certain, whilst the ill consequences, if any there be, are equivocal and remote.

But if we are called upon by our interest in a commercial point of view, to check the growth of ship building at Rangoon, how much more important is the subject when seen in a political light?

It is a fact which appears to merit some consideration, and is perhaps not generally adverted to, that in a very few years, and at a small comparative expence, a formidable navy may rise on the banks of the Irrawaddy, from the forests of Pegue. It is probably not known, that artificers* are educating by our enemies for that express purpose, whilst we encourage their progress in the science, by enabling them to derive benefit and acquire experience at the same time. National security, therefore, as well as mercantile advantage, strongly urge a vigilant attention to a quarter whence the means of injury to ourselves may so abundantly be drawn.

The imports into Rangoon from the British settlements, in the year 1794-5,

* The French have long maintained an agent at Rangoon, and are thoroughly acquainted with the advantages which the country of Pegue offers.

amounted, I was informed, to more than twelve lacks of rupees, about £.135,000 sterling; these consisted chiefly of coarse piece goods, glass, hardware, and broad cloth; the demand for the last article, in the year 1795, was considerable; returns were made almost wholly in timber. A few unimportant commodities are annually carried from Pegue to the coast of Pedier and the Prince of Wales's Island, for the China market. The timber trade, though attended with a certain advantage to the carrier, yet, not producing such large profits as a more hazardous venture to the eastern straits, to China, and the Malay coast, is seldom prosecuted by merchants of the highest commercial credit, who aim at making a fortune by the success of a single voyage, for which the ship is usually freighted with that valuable and alluring drug opium, so eagerly sought after by the Chinese, yet so strictly

prohibited by their government. Owing to this enterprizing spirit among merchants in India, a ship is seldom sent to carry wood, except when the owners have not funds to provide a more valuable cargo; and this inability frequently extends even to the means of defraying the expence of a lading of timber: hence the master of a vessel often finds himself embarrassed when on the eve of departure, and the vessel is sometimes detained by legal demands which he cannot discharge. Difficulty produces contention, and provokes bitter and generally groundless invectives against the laws of the country, which, though oppressive to the subject, are certainly lenient to foreigners.

Timber for maritime purposes is the only article the Birman empire produces of which we stand in indispensable need,

and to promote or encourage the culture and exportation of those commodities, which form the valuable staples of British India, almost all of which the kingdom of Ava is capable of yielding, would operate to the manifest injury of our own provinces. We require and should seek for nothing more than a mart for our manufactured goods, and, in return, to bring back their unwrought materials; interference in any other shape, appears to be impolitic, and likely, in the end, to prove prejudicial to ourselves.

The maritime ports of this great empire are commodious for shipping, and better situated for Indian commerce than those of any other power. Great Britain possesses the western side of what is called the Bay of Bengal; the government of Ava, the eastern; which is far superior to the former in the facilities it

affords to navigation. From the mouth of the Ganges to Cape Comorin, the whole range of our continental territory, there is not a single harbour capable of affording shelter to a vessel of five hundred tons burthen; it is an unbroken line of exposed shore, where ships must ride in open roads: but Ava comprehends within her extent of coast, three excellent ports; Negrais, the most secure harbour in the bay; Rangoon, and Mergui, each of which is equally convenient, and much more accessible than the river of Bengal, which is the only port in our possession within the bay.

The entrance into the river of Bengal presents as intricate and dangerous a channel as any that is known; and during three months of the year, a ship, in leaving the Ganges, incurs considerable hazard from being obliged to beat against a foul

wind, in shoal water, among surrounding sands; but from the harbour of Negrais a ship launches at once into the open bay, and may work to the southward, without any other impediment than what the monsoon opposes. Rangoon, at that particular season, is more perilous than Negrais, especially to vessels bound from the Straits of Malacca, Pulo Penang, and other eastern ports; these, if not well acquainted with the violent current setting at that period to the eastward, are liable to be deceived in their reckoning, and, imagining themselves to be farther west than they really are, sometimes stand too much to the northward, till they get entangled among the shoals of what is called the Bay of Martaban, whence a retreat is very difficult, and where the tide flows with such impetuosity, and rises so high, that anchors are useless, and retard, but for a very short period, the impending

fate. Ships sailing from the westward, by making Cape Negrais, and keeping within sight of the coast, until they come near the bar of Rangoon, avoid those dangers; at every other season Rangoon may be approached, and left, with perfect security; the bar is narrow, and contains depth of water, at three-quarters flood, sufficient for vessels of any burthen. The channel of the river is unimpeded, carrying from six to eight fathoms as high as the town of Rangoon.

Blessed with so extraordinary a coincidence of advantages, arising from situation, extent, produce, and climate, the kingdom of Ava, or more properly the Birman empire is, among eastern nations, second in importance to China alone, whilst, from its contiguity to British India, it becomes to us of much greater consequence. We can have no reason, in the

present prosperous state of our affairs, to dread the hostilities of all the native powers of India combined. Our hereditary foe is destroyed; and there remains no other, who bears towards us any fixed or rooted enmity: the Birmans certainly do not; but, however favourable their natural disposition may be, that characteristic pride and unbounded arrogance which govern their conduct towards other states, may lead them to offer indignity which we cannot avoid resenting, and to commit acts of aggression, as in the affair at Chittagong, which we shall be obliged to repel. Such necessity is sincerely to be deprecated: steadiness and temper in our negociations, and a reasonable allowance for their mistaken principles, will go far to avert the ill consequences that might arise from their haughty and weak assumption. We cannot expect from a proud and victorious peo-

ple, impressed with an extravagant opinion of their own power, that reverence which the states of India have been taught to feel for our established character. The principal nations to the east of Bengal are to be considered by themselves as a kind of body politic, wholly distinct from all others; and, in fact, China, Ava, and the countries south of them, compose a body in extent and number of inhabitants, more than equal to all Europe. These nations are connected by a striking similarity of manners and political maxims; to which, as they cannot be suddenly changed, we ought to assimilate, in our intercourse with their governments, as far as the dignity of our own will permit. To preserve a correspondence and a good understanding with the court of Ava, is essentially expedient for our own prosperity; but, for the reasons already stated, that connection should not be too inti-

mate. A limited trade and a preponderating influence, sufficient to counteract the machinations of our enemies, are the utmost lengths that we should go; by our not interfering farther, the Birmans will be convinced of the moderation and justice of our principles, and learn from them to repel the insidious advances of any other power, made with a latent view to undermine their dominion, and ultimately to wrest their country from them. It is our interest to maintain their independence, and to guard it from foreign encroachment; whilst a knowledge of this truth cannot fail, in the end, to unite the Birman government to ours, in bonds of reciprocal amity and confidence.

During the few days that we continued at Rangoon, I had the pleasure to interchange many reciprocal marks of civility with the Maywoon, who paid me a visit

on board the Sea Horse; after which we rowed in his war-boat to a very fine ship belonging to him, which had recently been built, and, he assured me, was entirely the workmanship of native artificers.

Whilst we remained here, Doctor Buchanan, accompanied by one of the officers of the Sea Horse, made an excursion on horseback a few miles off, to view a village inhabited by Carianers, the simple rural race of people of whom mention has already been made*. Passing by the great temple of Shoedagoung, they proceeded along an indifferent road, about three miles, till they arrived at one of the villages which they sought: it contained not more than ten or a dozen houses raised on posts, and disposed in such a manner as to inclose a square yard,

* See Vol. II. p. 108.

in which were a number of buffaloes. The head man was gone to a distant village; but one of the inhabitants invited the strangers to enter his dwelling, and hospitably offered what his house afforded. The visitants ascended a narrow ladder about twelve feet high into a sort of barn, divided into two by a mat partition; the floor was of rough boards, the sides of mats, and a roof, composed of bamboos, was covered with thatch; at night they draw up the ladder, and, closing the door, sleep secure from the assaults of wild beasts, or the depredations of thieves. Seven or eight men, as many women, and several children, constituted a numerous family; they seemed a healthy and vigorous race of people, and were of a fairer complexion than the generality of southern Birmans; some of the women wore rich strings of coral round their necks, and were even adorned with ornaments of

gold and silver; they speak a dialect peculiar to themselves, but their language is radically the same as the Birman. There are both Pegue and Birman Carianers, who differ in the same degree as the nations to which they are attached; they complain of being oppressed by the Birmans; but their appearance did not indicate severe oppression, and they have a certain sale for whatever their industry can raise. Doctor Buchanan saw several Birmans on the road, carrying baskets; some going for the produce of their gardens, others returning with burthens of fruit and vegetables. The life these people lead, is truly pastoral; they have no other business or object except that of cultivating the soil, and tending their flocks; their religion is the worship of Gaudma; but in these rites they do not join with the same fervour that animates the Birmans; they rather seem to acquiesce in the doc-

trines of their conquerors, which they do not even profess to understand.

Dr. Buchanan interrogated one of the men, who admitted their want of knowledge, and assigned as the reason, that God once wrote his laws and commands on the skin of a buffalo, and called upon all nations of the earth to come and take a copy; a summons which all obeyed, except the Carianers, who had not leisure, being occupied in the business of husbandry; and that, in consequence of this neglect, they remained ever since in a state of ignorance, without any other cares than those which related to their pastoral employment. On going away, Dr. Buchanan offered them a few pieces of silver, which so excited their surprise, being quite unaccustomed to such acts of liberality, that they hesitated to receive

the money, and seemed at a loss to what motive to ascribe his bounty. After looking at one another, and talking for a minute or two with much earnestness, the women, on a sudden, as if his design had just been discovered, all ran away laughing, whilst the men sullenly declined the gift; in fact, they concluded that the Doctor wanted to purchase the favours of one of their females, having no notion of a disinterested donation. The ladies, however, did not wait to ascertain for whom the golden apple was designed, and it was in vain he tried to convince the men that their suspicions were ill founded. These poor people entertain a delicacy in regard to women, which their more enlightened conquerors do not feel. To prove the purity of his intentions, however, the Doctor left the money on the floor when he departed. The gentlemen

returned by the same road, and in their way examined a mineral spring in the neighbourhood of the great Pagoda.

I had an opportunity, at Rangoon, of observing that the Birmans of distinction played at chess, a circumstance which, from our secluded situation at the capital, had escaped my notice. This game is held in high estimation among the superior ranks: the board they use is exactly similar to ours, containing 64 squares, and their number of troops the same, 16 on each side; but the names, the power and disposal of them differ essentially: the king and his minister (a queen is never introduced by the Orientals) are mounted on elephants; these are defended by two castles or yettay, two knights on horseback, Mene, two officers on foot, one called Meem, the other Chekéy, and eight Maundelay or foot soldiers: the forces of

each party are arranged on three lines, by which eight squares remain unoccupied; none of the pieces possess equal force with our queen; and this restricted operation renders the Birman mode of playing more complex and difficult than ours. The Birmans affirm, that it is a game of high antiquity, and that it is acknowledged and authorized by their sacred writings, although every play of chance is prohibited. This testimony confirms* the opinion of the late Sir William Jones, that chess was invented in India, and is not, as generally imagined, of Persian origin: the Birmans call it Chedreen, a word that bears some resemblance to the name which is given to the game in most other parts of the world.

* See a paper on the Indian game of Chess by the President of the Asiatic Society, in the 2d vol. of Asiatic Researches.

During the time that the English deputation was at Ummerapoora, Captain Thomas witnessed at Rangoon a remarkable instance of a trial by the ordeal of water, the circumstances of which he thus related to me: Two women of the middling class litigated a small property before the court of justice; and as the judges found great difficulty in deciding the question of right, it was at length agreed, by mutual consent, to put the matter to the issue of an ordeal. The parties, attended by the officers of the court, several Rhahaans, or priests, and a vast concourse of people, repaired to a tank or pond, in the vicinity of the town. After praying to the Rhahaans for some time, and performing certain purificatory ceremonials, the litigants entered the pond, and waded in it, till the water reached their breasts; they were accompanied by two or three men, one of whom

placing the women close to each other, and putting a board on their heads, at a signal given, pressed upon the board till he immersed them both at the same instant. They remained out of sight about a minute and a half, when one of them, nearly suffocated, raised her head, whilst the other continued to sit upon her hams at the bottom, but was immediately lifted up by the men; after which an officer of the court solemnly pronounced judgment in her favour; and of the justice of this decision none of the bye-standers appeared to entertain the smallest doubt, from the infallibility of the proof which had been given.

The trial by ordeal, in all countries where the Hindoo religion prevails, is as ancient as their records. The late Ali Ibrahim Khan, native chief magistrate of Benares, has communicated, in a very

curious paper *, the modes by which this appeal to the Deity is made, as they are described in the Metaschera, or comment on the Dherma Sastra, in the chapter on oaths: the Birmans, being governed by the same authority, observe nearly similar forms; but as knowledge increases, and mankind become more enlightened, these absurd practices lose ground, and have of late years been discountenanced by the judicial courts both of India and of Ava.

Previous to our departure, the Maywoon of Pegue delivered to my care a letter addressed to the Governor-General of India, couched in very friendly terms, but dictated in the usual style of turgid extravagance; he enumerated in it the concessions granted in favour of English

* This paper was presented to the Asiatic Society by Warren Hastings, Esq. See "On the trial by ordeal among the Hindoos," *Asiat. Research. Vol. I.*

commerce, and expressed a determination to execute his part with punctuality and attention. His Birman Majesty has long entertained a desire to procure an English carriage, with the distinctions of Birman royalty attached to it: in this letter the Maywoon made a request that such a one might be sent; and in order to direct the artist, I was furnished with a very intelligible and well executed drawing *, performed at Ummerapoora, by the King's painter. It displayed the carriage and body of an English crane-necked chariot,

* The European part of this drawing was made from an old carriage which had been introduced into the Ava country several years before. The Governor-General complied with both the requests contained in the Maywoon's letter, and in the following year sent a very superb chariot to his Birman Majesty, constructed according to the representation: the top of the spire, notwithstanding the body hung very low, was 18 feet from the ground; it was extremely rich and well executed.

gilded all over: from the top of the body there rose a regal spire, or piasath, in separate stages, bearing a miniature resemblance to those which ornamented the palace and royal barge; four lions in a crouching attitude guarded the carriage, two on the fore part, and two behind; and a bird, designed, I imagine, to represent the Henza, or tutelary goose, was placed in front with expanded wings. The Maywoon's letter, however, contained a requisition of yet greater importance; which was, to obtain materials for the establishment of a mint, a design which, if carried into effect *, must considerably promote the prosperity of the country, as the necessity of weighing lumps of lead and silver, and ascertaining

* It is surprising that the Chinese have no national coin; at the port of Canton, dollars in some measure supply the deficiency; but in the interior of the kingdom the inconvenience must be generally felt.

the purity, operate as a sensible impediment to commerce.

On the 26th of November, the day preceding that of our embarkation, I waited on the Maywoon, accompanied by the gentlemen of the deputation and Captain Thomas, to take our final leave. I had occasion to feel myself individually obliged to him for his personal attentions, whilst his mild administration and pleasing manners had acquired my esteem: he is universally acknowledged to be a good man, and seems highly to deserve that reputation. I had opportunities of witnessing several instances of his benevolence and humanity, and, although his authority within his own jurisdiction is absolute, I never heard him accused of an abuse of his power, or of a single act of oppression or injustice. Such a character, in a country where the most rigorous and

often barbarous despotism prevails, is entitled to particular encomium. We parted with mutual, and, I am inclined to believe, not insincere, professions of permanent good will.

On the morning of the 27th we breakfasted on board the Sea Horse; most of the attendants with our heavy baggage had embarked on the preceding day, and at ten o'clock we weighed anchor. It had previously been agreed, that the Company's ship should salute the Birman flag with eleven guns, which were to be answered by an equal number from the battery on shore: Captain Thomas performed his part of the agreement; but the battery, which was very slow in acknowledging the compliment, returned only seven. This apparent mark of disrespect, which could not be attributed to ignorance, I conceived rather to originate

in the person who had charge of the battery, and who might think to recommend himself by it, than from any higher authority; it was, however, such an ostensible and public slight to the Company's colours, that I judged it expedient to write a note to the Maywoon, to acquaint him of the fact.

We dropped down with the ebb as far as the Chokey, or watch station, from whence the custom-house officer visited the Sea Horse on her first arrival. In passing the mouth of the Pegue river we observed, that at the entrance it was nearly as wide as the great river; but that breadth soon diminishes to a very contracted space: several large creeks branched off both to the right and the left, which the pilot said were navigable to a considerable distance by boats of heavy burthen. In the evening we again weighed,

and crossed the bar at midnight; early next morning we saw the landmark called the Elephant, and, favoured by the ebb, passed the China Bakir river. The wind not being strong enough, when the tide turned, to enable us to stem the flood, we again came to anchor, being in company with a ship named the Hope, bound also to Calcutta. On the following morning we stood to the southward on the first of the ebb, which bore us along with it against an unfavourable breeze. On the 30th we made Diamond Island and Cape Negrais, and next day at an early hour passed a ship standing towards Rangoon, which appeared to have suffered severely from a recent storm, having lost her main-top and fore-top-gallant masts; the wind was at this time north north-west, and a heavy swell from the same quarter indicated that there had

lately been a hard gale, a very unusual circumstance at that season of the year.

Keeping within a few leagues of the coast, we continued to beat against an unfavourable wind until the 9th of December, when we made Cheduba, a fertile island belonging to the Birman government: the channel between this island and the main is annually navigated by large trading boats, but it does not afford a safe passage for shipping. The length of the island we judged to be about 45 miles; it yields abundance of rice, and is governed by a Chekey, or Lieutenant, who is subject to the Maywoon of Arracan. Having now the benefit of regular land and sea breezes, we were enabled to make some progress to the northward. On the morning of the 11th we saw what are called the Broken Islands,

on the coast of Arracan, which are for the most part a barren assemblage of rocky eminences, affording shelter only to pirates and thieves. On the 12th and 13th we experienced much inconvenience, the wind, which was directly against us, blowing with such violence that the ship laboured greatly, and our fore-top-sail was torn from the yard. On the 14th the weather moderated, and, the wind veering a little to the eastward, we had the good fortune on the 16th to discover a pilot schooner at anchor, between the eastern and western reefs near the mouth of the Ganges: neap tides prevailing, our passage up the river was tedious, and the wind coming invariably from the northern quarter, rendered it hazardous to proceed by night. On the 22d we reached Budge Budge,,where I found a pulwar* waiting,

* A commodious kind of boat used in the river Ganges.

which my friend Captain Sandys, as soon as he heard of the arrival of the Sea Horse, had dispatched to meet me; at this place I quitted the ship, and in two hours reached Calcutta, after an eventful absence of ten months.

The Plants, of which the following descriptions and figures are given, have been selected by the President *of the* Royal Society, *as the most rare and curious among a copious and valuable collection made by* Dr. Buchanan, *who transmitted to the* Court *of* Directors *an* hortus siccus *in excellent preservation, together with delineations of each plant, executed on the spot.*

THALIA CANNÆFORMIS.

Forst. Prodr. n. 3. *Linn. Spec. Plant. edit. Willdenow,* 1. *p.* 16.

Thayng payng *Birm.*

Habitat in sylvis, præsertim humidioribus, in Insulis Andamannicis, Rangoon, III. IV.

Culmus solidus, teres, glaber, ramosus. *Rami* geniculati, divaricati.

Folia caulina, alterna, patentia, petiolata, ovalia, integerrima, glabra: nervis plurimis lateralibus, adscendentibus, parallelis.

Petiolus geniculo instructus, superne teres, inferne membranaceus, vaginalis, amplexicaulis, ramulo oppositus. *Stipula* solitaria, petiolo opposita, sæpe vaginarum longitudine, subulata, dorso-canaliculata; interdum etiam adsunt stipulæ sparsæ infrafoliaceæ.

Panicula pendula, oppositifolia. *Rachis* flexuosa, articulata, compressa: arti-

culis apice glumiferis. *Glumæ* bivalves, bifloræ, persistentes, pedunculum involventes: valvula inferiore longitudine pedunculi, duriore, superiorem tenuiorem, coloratam amplexa. *Pedunculus* coloratus, clavatus, bifidus, carnosus. *Flores* albi, solitarii, apicibus pedicelli insidentes; singuli rudimentum alterius ad basin habent.

Perianthium proprium tripartitum, superum, brevissimum, coloratum: laciniis erectis, acuminatis.

Corolla monopetala, irregularis. *Tubus* trigonus. *Limbus* duplex: Laciniæ tres exteriores æquales, lanceolatæ, patentes, acuminatæ, undulatæ; Laciniarum interiorum duæ latiores, patentes; tertia brevis, cucullata, genitalia tegens.

Filamentum petaloideum, bipartitum: laciniis falcatis. *Anthera* unica, clavata, margini laciniæ dextræ filamenti adnata.

Germen inferum, parvum. *Stylus* cylindraceus, longitudine filamenti, tubo corollæ ad basin adnatus, apice incurvus, liber. *Stigma* concavum.

GARDENIA CORONARIA.

Yæng-gap *Birm.*

Habitat in vicis et hortis: Rangoon. ♄. III—V.

Rami sparsi, foliati, læves, annulati, internodiis superne incrassatis.

Folia ramulorum opposita, approximata patentia, petiolata, ovalia, apicem versus plerumque latiora, integerrima, acuminata, utrinque nitida; juniora gummoso-viscida. *Petiolus* brevissimus, semiteres, supra convexus, erectus, scabriusculus.

Stipulæ intrafoliaceæ, vaginantes, erectæ, longitudine petiolorum, apicibus scariosis.

Flores axillares, sessiles, solitarii, folio longiores, flavi, patentes.

Calyx monophyllus, erectus, pentagonus, hinc dehiscens, apice obtusus.

Corolla hypocrateriformis. *Tubus* cylindraceus, calyce multo longior, gummoso-viscidus. *Faux* nuda. *Limbus* quinque- seu sex-partitus: laciniis ovalibus, obtusis, supra venosis, obliquis, margine exteriore rectiore.

Filamenta nulla. *Antheræ* quinque, lineares, apici tubi adnatæ.

Germen turbinatum, inferum, pentagonum, biloculare, polyspermum.

Stylus cylindraceus, longitudine tubi, apice dilatatus, compressus. *Stigma* margini apicis styli adnatum, sulco longitudinali contorto gummifero exaratum.

Drupa oblonga, umbilicata, quinque-carinata.

Nux ovalis, sub-bilocularis, pulpa repleta: *Semina* plura, ovata, plana, nidulantia.

PONTEDERIA DILATATA.

Ka-dauk kyee *Birm.*
Habitat in aquosis: Rangoon. V.

Structura *Pontederiæ vaginali* L. simillima, sed multoties major.

Folia ovata, profunde cordata, angulis posterioribus oblongis, obtusis, minime divergentibus. *Petioli* dehiscentia spathæformis, ovata, magnitudine ovi gallinacei.

Flores cœrulei, corymbosi, quibus præcipue differt a Pontederia hastata L.

Spatha multiflora, oblonga, monophylla, latere interiore dehiscens, petioli dehiscentiæ opposita.

Petala sex, sessilia, carinata, duplici serie posita: tria interiora, obovata, obtusa, supremo erecto; inferioribus patulis; tria exteriora lanceolata, acuta, patentia.

Filamenta sex, subulata, petalis inserta, iisque dimidio breviora: quinque superiora adscendentia; sextum erectum, ad latus dextrum deflexum. *Antheræ* lineares, bisulcæ, quinque declinatæ fertiles ad apicem dehiscentes; sexta inferior major, sterilis, diversi coloris.

Germen superum, ovatum, trigonum. *Stylus* cylindraceus, longitudine staminum, incurvus, ad latus sinistrum deflexus. *Stigma* obtusum, compressum.

Capsula ovata, acuminata, trilocularis, trivalvis, tecta carinis petalorum persistentibus, contortis.

Semina plurima, receptaculo communi affixa.

BAUHINIA DIPHYLLA.

Pa-lam *Birm.*

Habitat in sylvis. Mæaday. ♄. VI.

Caulis fruticosus, scandens, ramosus, glaber. *Rami* fructiferi crassi, teretes, foliosi; steriles tetragoni, quadrisulci.

Folia alterna, petiolata, conjugata. *Foliola* subreniformia, obtusa, integerrima, glabra. *Petiolus* longitudine fere foliorum, teres, utrinque incrassatus, apice subtus mucronatus.

Stipulæ nullæ, nisi tuberculum ad basin petioli utrinque.

Cirrhus lateralis, simplex, compressus, acuminatus, revolutus, folio brevior.

Aculeus reflexus, apici petioli inter folia insidens.

Racemus terminalis, simplex, erectus, subangulatus. *Flores* magni ante florescentiam recurvi; puberes erecti, sparsi,

solitarii, pedicellati. *Pedicelli* compressi, longitudine fere floris, crassi, basi squamula acuminata, versus apicem cirrhulo notati. Petala albida, viscida. Pistillum castaneum.

Calyx persistens, monophyllus, quinquefidus, crassus, basi turbinatus: laciniis longis, lanceolatis, revolutis, post florescentiam contortis.

Petala quinque, æqualia, longitudine calycis, lanceolata, erectiuscula, unguiculata, apici tubi calycis inserta.

Filamenta decem, erecta, subulata, longitudine fere corollæ, apici tubi corollæ inserta. *Antheræ* lineares, incumbentes, biloculares, supra sulcatæ.

Germen superum, pedicellatum, compressum, lineare, utrinque acuminatum. *Stylus* brevis, teres, longitudine staminum. *Stigma* obtusum.

Legumen maturum non vidi.

SONNERATIA APETALA.

Kam-ba-la *Birm.*

Habitat in ripis humidis, inundatis, maritimis. Rangoon. ♄. V.

Arbor pulcherrima, facie Salicis babylonicæ, sed elatior. *Rami* sparsi, penduli, teretes, glabri. *Ramuli* oppositi, divaricati, subbrachiati, glabri, filiformes.

Folia ramulorum pauca, opposita, petiolata, ovato-lanceolata, margine altero magis gibbo, integerrima, sæpius obtusa, enervia, avenia, plana, subcarnosa. *Petiolus* linearis, depressus, margine utrinque acutus, brevis, obliquus, glaber.

Flores pedunculati, cernui, virescentes, glabri, magnitudine nucis moschatæ, axillares subsolitarii; terminales subterni. Stamina alba. *Pedunculi* foliis dimidio breviores, penduli, uniflori, glabri, al-

bidi, apicem versus incrassati, articulati, angulati.

Calyx monophyllus, coriaceus, crassus, campanulatus, ultra medium quadrifidus: laciniis ovatis, patulis, acutis.

Corolla nulla.

Nectarium: membrana crassa, fundo calycis adnata, margine integro, staminifero, ultra calycis divisuram producto.

Filamenta plurima, linearia, ad basin erecta; superius incurva, longitudine calycis, apici nectarii multiplici serie insidentia. *Antheræ* parvæ, erectæ, cordatæ.

Germen superum, turbinatum. *Stylus* teres, staminibus longior, flexuosus. *Stigma* maximum, supra convexum, subtus concavum, pileiforme.

Pomum orbiculatum, depressum, ad basin calyce patente cinctum, octo-loculare, stylo persistente mucronatum.

Semina plurima angulata, in pulpa nidulantia.

EPIDENDRUM MOSCHATUM.

Thee-kua nee *Birm.*

Habitat in arboribus. Rangoon. V.

Caulis fruticosus, crassitie digiti minoris, radicans, scandens, octo-sulcatus, vaginatus, articulatus, ramosus. *Rami* structura caulis, foliati, erectiusculi, orgyales.

Folia ramea plura, alterna, bifaria, patentia, vaginantia, lanceolata, integerrima, obtusa, nitida, subtus fusco maculata, enervia, venis longitudinalibus parallelis striata, plana, carnosa, internodiis multo longiora. *Vaginæ* adpressæ, striatæ, ore integerrimo.

Racemi oppositifolii, simplices, ramis foliosis breviores. *Flores* odoratissimi, flavi, macula purpurea in nectario utrinque. *Bractea* striata ad basin singuli germinis.

Petala quinque, patula, venosa: tria exteriora lanceolata, obtusa, duobus inferioribus basi gibbis, coalitis; duo interiora latiora, longiora, ovata. *Nectarium* apice bicorne, ad basin acuminatum, carinatum, desinens in laminam assurgentem, cucullatam, intus pilosam.

Filamentum brevissimum, subulatum, ex parte summa nectarii postice inter cornua enatum, umbraculum supra gibbum, subtus bifoveatum gerens. *Antheræ* binæ, parvæ, in foveis umbraculi nidulantes, cavitati in suprema parte nectarii insidentes.

Germen inferum, longissimum, teres. *Stylus* nullus. *Stigma:* fovea subrotunda, mellifera, antice inter cornua superiora nectarii exarata, desinens in canalem ad germen penetrantem, a cavitate antherifera valvula obtusa separatum.

AGYNEJA COCCINEA.

Ta-hmayng-tsoop kyee *Birm.*
Habitat in sylvis. Pegu. ♄. IV.
Folia esculenta.

Arbuscula ramulis rectis, teretibus, carinatis, e basi petiolorum utrinque decurrente; patulis, nitidis; tenellis pubescentibus.

Folia ramea plura, alterna, horizontalia, petiolata, lanceolata, integerrima, obtusa, nitida, internodiis multo longiora. *Petiolus* teres, gibbus, brevissimus, assurgens, glaber.

Stipulæ laterales, geminæ, caducæ, sessiles, subulatæ, erectæ.

Flores axillares, parvi, masculi decem seu duodecim, pedunculati, flavi, nutantes, mixti femineis totidem, sessilibus, erectis, viridibus. *Pedunculus* filiformis, petiolo longior, pubescens.

Masculi Flores.

Calyx sexpartitus, externe pubescens: laciniis oblongis, obtusis: tribus exterioribus reflexis, interioribus patentibus.

Corolla nulla.

Antheræ plures, lineares, adnatæ rudimento pistilli oblongo, acuminato.

Feminei Flores.

Calyx sexpartitus: laciniis subulatis, persistentibus, germen arcte amplexis.

Corolla nulla.

Germen magnum, orbiculatum, depressum. *Stylus* crassus, brevis. *Stigma* cavum, margine vix sexdentato.

Capsula magna, orbiculata, depressa, umbilicata, novem- ad duodecim-sulcata, novem- ad duodecim-locularis: loculis medio dehiscentibus.

Semina in singulo loculo duo seu tria, verticalia, angulata, subovata, apice receptaculo centrali affixa.

HERITIERA FOMES.

Kanatso *Birm.*

Habitat in ripis æstu inundatis. Rangoon. ♄. IV.

Lignum fomes optimus; bona quoque materies naupegis et fabris lignariis.

Arbor ramis erectis, rigidis. *Ramuli* teretes, sulco obsoleto, ex latere utroque petiolorum decurrente, cinerei, fusco minutissime punctati.

Folia sparsa, petiolata, lanceolato-oblonga, obtusa, integerrima, venis minutissime reticulata; supra nitida, viridia; subtus incana, punctis fuscis adspersa. *Petiolus* brevis, teres, cinereus, glanduloso-punctatus.

Panicula axillaris, folio brevior, patens, nuda, supra decomposita. *Pedunculi* filiformes, pubescentes. *Flores* erecti, parvi, externe cinerei, intus rubicundi.

MASCULI FLORES.

Calyx cylindricus, monophyllus, quadrifidus: laciniis patulis, ovatis, acutis.

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Corolla nulla.

Receptaculum orbiculatum, depressum, in fundo calycis, cui insidet *Filamentum* subulatum, erectum, calyce brevius. *Antheræ* coadunatæ in unam, ovatam, acuminatam, parvam.

HERMAPHRODITI FLORES, in eadem panicula, pauciores.

Calyx ut in masculis.

Corolla nulla.

Filamenta nulla. *Antheræ* quatuor, bilobæ, germinis basin ambientes, minimæ (sine dubio effœtæ *Edit.*)

Germen ovatum, quadrisulcatum, superum, receptaculo magno insidens, acuminatum. *Styli* quatuor, brevissimi, coadunati. *Stigma* obtusum, quadri-lobum.

Capsulæ quatuor, pedicellatæ, orbiculatæ, marginatæ, basi exterius gibbæ, dorso carinatæ, lignosæ.

Semina solitaria maxima, ovata, compressa, intus cava, apice corculifera. Fructificatio sæpe demit, aliquando addit quartam partem.

APPENDIX.

No. I.

To Captain Michael Symes, Agent to the Court of Ava.

SIR,

AGREEABLY to your desire, I proceeded, this forenoon, to the opposite side, to visit the two principal Woongees.

Some time after my arrival at the house of the first in rank, he made his appearance without any display of grandeur or parade, further than being in his court dress. His reception was polite, as was his behaviour during the time I remained; and, so far as I recollect, the following is the purport of our conversation, which was carried on through the medium of Baba-Sheen: he first asked me what kind of a passage we had

from Bengal to Rangoon; whether, since our arrival, we had been comfortably situated, or otherwise? To these I replied, that our passage had been pleasant, and that we had experienced, since our arrival, every attention and comfort we could desire. His next question was, what period had elapsed since we left Bengal? which having answered, he then inquired how the King and Queen were when the last accounts left England? On receiving my answer to this, he asked how the Governor-General was when we left Bengal, and what was his age?

These, I believe, are the only questions proposed: he then desired Baba-Sheen to inform me, that he would use his best endeavours with the King to promote the objects for which we had come; likewise, that he was very anxious for our welfare on hearing of the sickness and mortality that prevailed amongst the Chinese, and, on that account, would recommend to his Majesty to allow us to depart as soon as the season was favourable; adding, that we should carry with us his good wishes for our safe return to Bengal.

I desired Baba-Sheen to intimate the high sense we entertained of his solicitude for, and good intention towards, us ; but requested he might not give himself any uneasiness on our account, as we had every comfort we could possibly desire, and, during the time of our residence here, had found the climate to be a very healthy one. Having inquired who the Moonshee, &c. were, he desired Baba-Sheen to request our acceptance of some sweetmeats, &c. which he had provided for us, and then withdrew.

From his house I went to that of the second Woongee, where, after I had been seated for a little while, he made his appearance, dressed, as I was told, in the proper war dress of the Birmans. His reception was polite, but more ostentatious than that of the first minister, having assembled a great number of people (in their various dresses used on occasions of ceremony) in the hall into which we were conducted ; at each end of which were several racks full of muskets, spears, and swords; the different insignia of his office were likewise displayed to the best advantage.

A little after he came in, a Nakhaan desired Baba-Sheen to inquire whether our passage from Bengal had been favourable, and how we had been, with respect to convenience, since our arrival? These I answered in the same terms I had done before. I was then asked what time a ship commonly took to perform the voyage from Bengal to England; to which having replied, I was again asked how the King and Queen were, likewise whether the Governor-General was in good health when we left Bengal? Having received my answers to these, they next inquired whether the Governor-General's authority extended over all our possessions in India? This I answered in the affirmative; and here ended our conversation.

These several questions were put by the Nakhaan, no doubt, by the Woongee's desire; but he did not speak a word himself till towards the conclusion, when he gave orders, I believe, to bring tea, sweetmeats, &c. which being placed before us, he soon after retired. I remained in his house till I was told by the Shawbunder and Baba-

Sheen that it was not necessary to stay any longer.

Soon after we had set out on our return, I was informed that the King's eldest son was approaching on his way to the palace, and I was desired, at the same time, to withdraw into a bye street, which I complied with; but as not one of the public officers who were with me paid any compliment to the Prince, or desired me to do so, I remained where I was conducted without saluting him, concluding it was not customary, or that if it had they would have informed me.

I am, &c.

T. Wood.

7th September 1795.

No. II.

To the Chief Woongee and Council of State.

The day being fixed for my departure, it becomes a duty incumbent on me freely to declare to you, as his Majesty's chief Minister, my sentiments on the conduct which the court of Ummerapoora has thought fit to observe towards me in my official character, that nothing may hereafter be attributed to misapprehension, or the want of a clear representation on my part, on subjects which may, at some future period, eventually involve the general interest and happiness.

There appears to have existed, from the time of my arrival, although not an avowed, yet a real inclination, to consider me in the capacity of an agent from a subordinate and commercial settlement, rather than the delegate of a great and sovereign state; as a per-

son come in the character of a petitioner to solicit a favour, instead of the representative of a nation, which offers at least as much as it desires, and, in the proposal, can be actuated by no view except what must tend to the mutual advantage of both countries.

Of the purity of the intentions of the English government, if any doubts ever did exist, those doubts must long since have been obliterated; you have had, in every transaction, the most unequivocal proofs of the conciliatory disposition of the Governor-General; and latterly such an * instance as is not often paralleled. Violence on one part, was repressed by moderation on the other; menaces were combated by reason; and that which was denied to intemperate demands, was afterwards granted as an act of cool and deliberate justice.

I have already clearly stated to his Majesty, in the memorial I had the honour to present shortly after my arrival, that the Governor-General's principal view, in deputing me,

* The surrender of the delinquent refugees. See Vol. I. p. 282.

was to promote confidence, and give to his Majesty authorized assurances of the Governor-General's personal regard; and I now repeat, that these were his motives, rather than the expectation of any great national benefit to arise to the English from such an alliance. The individuals who prosecute trade to this country are far from being merchants of the highest commercial consideration.

Of the power and resources of the British in India, you cannot be so misinformed as to suppose, that they are under the necessity of soliciting the friendship of any nation on earth, out of a prudential regard to their own security, or from an inability to maintain a cause of justice and their national honour, in opposition to all the force that could combine against them. It is not from a petty island *, which may send out two or three piratical privateers, that a government, whose dominions extend from Ceylon to the mountains of Tibet, from the Gulf of Bengal to

* Mauritius.

theWestern Sea, can have any thing to dread: apprehension, therefore, had no share in the present mission; and, I desire to have it clearly understood, that I come, not to seek a favour, but to cement friendship; not to supplicate, but to propose.

It is, however, but too evident, that his Majesty has not been pleased to consider me in the light of an agent from a sovereign state; and from his total silence with regard to the Governor-General of India, and his not honouring me with a personal audience, it is reasonable to conclude, that very erroneous estimations have been attempted to be held out, both of the importance of the Governor-General individually, and of the nation at large. Permit me, therefore, now to acquaint you, that the authority of the Governor-General is supreme over all the territories of the Company in the East; and the limits of the British possessions best explain their national consequence.

I was, at one time, taught to believe, by those with whom I officially communicated, that the non-appearance of his Majesty, when

I made my first visit to the palace, was a circumstance merely accidental, and that, on the day of my dismission, I should be honoured with a formal interview; also, that the arrangement which I submitted to his Majesty's ministers would be acceded to, and that a deputation would be sent to Bengal, to obtain a counterpart of the articles ratified in due form. How far it may be intended to fulfil these assurances, the tenor of the language held by his Majesty's ministers yesterday at the Lotoo gives me sufficient room to doubt, and they best can tell what his Majesty's resolutions are on that head; but if it should not be meant to perform what I had such grounds given me to expect, I shall certainly have just cause to complain of being egregiously misled.

He who undeceives, has the best title to confidence; and I have, in this address, the fairest pretensions to yours; were I to depart from Ummerapoora, dissembling the dissatisfaction I feel at the manner of my reception, and professing myself contented when I really was the reverse, I might, perhaps, be

justified by prudent policy; but I should swerve from that candour which I have been instructed by the Governor-General to observe in all my communications with this court.

In conformity with the spirit of those instructions, I can, with great certainty, assure you, that unless I am honoured with an audience of his Majesty, in the capacity of agent from the Governor-General, it will be the last time an agent from the Governor-General will ever be subjected to a similar mortification. The Governor-General of India is actuated by far different principles, than to make a matter of incivility, in a point of form, grounds for a serious dispute, or suffer it to affect his general line of conduct; but should any cause of umbrage arise in future between the nations, it cannot be expected that advances will be again made, on the part of the English government, for an amicable explanation, however desirable it might be, unless the proposals originate here, and are couched in a style different from the language which is commonly

held: it will, otherwise, be totally impossible to discuss any points that may occur, which, like the late business at Chittagong, would probably only require communication to end satisfactorily. To whom, then, can the blame be imputed? Surely not to the English government, which has gone every honourable length to establish concord and confidence. They alone, who are the advisers, must be responsible for the consequences.

It is from the presumption that his Majesty has no design to honour me with a personal interview, in the character of agent from the Governor-General of India, that I write thus; a conclusion fairly drawn from the equivocal replies which you and your coadjutors gave to my questions yesterday at the Lotoo. Whilst the matter is yet undetermined, it is right that you should know my opinion; as, being apprized of the light in which it will be taken, you will have the means of forming a right judgment, and regulating your conduct accordingly. I will, with great pleasure, accept of an invitation

to attend on the day of your festival, and join with the nobility in compliments to the throne, provided I receive assurances, that, on the 1st of October, when a reply is to be given to the Governor-General's letter, I shall be received by his Majesty in person, as agent from the Governor-General, and be honoured with a formal interview. Without such an assurance, specified in writing, it will be impossible for me to have the honour of joining in the general festivity.

Having thus delivered my sentiments with explicit freedom, I now close my correspondence; earnestly exhorting you, as a friend to your country and your king, to advise his Majesty with prudence and moderation, as many events to come may depend on the resolution of the present day; and an act which is to determine whether or not any intercourse is in future to be held with a neighbouring and powerful state, is a matter of sufficient magnitude at least to demand your most serious consideration.

Ummerapoora,
20th Sept. 1796.

MICHAEL SYMES,
Agent to the Court of Ava.

No. III.

Translation of a Letter from the King of Ava to Sir John Shore, Governor General, &c. &c.

THE Lord of Earth and Air, the Monarch of extensive Countries, the Sovereign of the kingdoms of *Sonahparinda*, *Tombadeva*, *Seawuttena*, *Zaniengnia*, *Soonaboomy*, in the district of *Hurry Mounza*, in the country of *Zemee*, *Hamaratta*, *Dzodinagara*, Sovereign of all these wide extended regions, Lord of the great cities of *Poucka Yama*, *Sirykettera*, *Sygnie*, *Leboo*, *Bamoo*, *Magone*, *Momeik*, *Momien*, *Neoum*, *Shoe Mona*, *Mobree*, *Quantong*, of all which countries and cities the governors and potentates send presents of respect and submission to the Royal Presence; also *Henzawuddy*, commonly called *Pegue*, the port of *Rangoon*, the port of

Bassien, *Arracan*, the port of *Deniawuddy*, *Sandoway*, the port of *Dwarawuddy*, *Maoung*, the port of *Mickawuddy*, *Ramriè*, the port of *Ramawuddy*, *Mondema*, or *Martaban*, *Tavoy*, *Brieck*, or *Mergui*, and *Tenasserem*; ports belonging to his Majesty, where merchants trade and the inhabitants are protected; Proprietor of all kinds of precious stones, of the mines of Rubies, Agate, Lasni *, Sapphires, Opal; also the mines of Gold, Silver, Amber, Lead, Tin, Iron, and Petroleum; whence every thing desirable that the earth yields can be extracted, as the Trees, Leaves, and Fruit of excellence are produced in Paradise; Possessor of Elephants, Horses, Carriages, Fire Arms, Bows, Spears, Shields, and all manner of warlike weapons; Sovereign of valiant Generals and victorious Armies, invulnerable as the rock *Mahakonda*; *Mahanuggera*, *Ummerapoora*, the great and flourishing Golden City, illumined and illuminating, as the Habitation

* I could not discover to what class of precious stones Lasni belonged.

of Angels, lasting as the firmament, and embellished with Gold, Silver, Pearls, Agate, and the nine original * Stones; the Golden Throne, the seat of splendour, whence the royal mandate issues and protects mankind; the King who performs the ten duties incumbent on all kings, called *Mangianterra*, all of which this great King duly performeth; whose understanding, by divine aid, is enlightened to guide his people in the right way, and preserve them in pious obedience and the road of true religion; the ease and happiness of whom daily increase, under the auspices of such a Monarch; Master of the white, red, and mottled Elephants; may his praise be repeated, far as the influence of the sun and moon, of him whose servants place the fortunate foot of favour and confidence, like the blooming Lotos, on their obedient heads: Such are the high Ministers, the Guardians of the State, from among whom the principal Woongee thus announceth.

* What these were I could not learn.

The illustrious Governor General, the Representative of the King of England, the Governor of the Company at Calcutta in Bengal, having deputed Captain Michael Symes, with letters and presents to the Golden Feet, who happily arrived at the port of Rangoon on the eleventh of the month of Tagoo, in the Birman year one thousand one hundred and fifty-seven, and the Mohammedan year one thousand two hundred and nine, on the twenty-eighth of the month of Shabaan, of which the Governor of Henzawuddy transmitted regular information to the Golden Feet, together with a list of presents, as follows: two pieces of gold muslin, two pieces of silver muslin, four pieces of white flowered muslin, four pieces of silk, ten pieces of variegated silk, six pieces of plain satin, two pieces of flowered satin, two pieces of velvet, six corabahs * of rose water, one fine crystal stand with appendages, six crystal water cups bordered, two pair of candle shades, two crystal cups with silver feet, two

* A jar in which rose water is usually kept.

large crystal bowls, two large mirrors, one double-barrel, one rifle-barrel, and one plain gun, one pair of pistols, six pair of golden slippers, twenty-five pieces of broad cloth, an electric machine, and the Bagwaat Geeta*. When this intelligence reached the Presence, orders were sent to the before-mentioned Governor, to expedite the journey of Captain Symes, with his attendants and baggage; also to provide suitable boats, and every thing requisite for his conveyance; and, conformably to these orders, the Governor acted. When the deputation arrived near the great city of Pegham, officers of rank were sent from the Presence to meet Captain Symes; also a boat, such as is used by nobility, with two war-boats to tow it; likewise guards and attendants to do him honour, as is consistent with the duties of friendship. After his arrival, all necessaries, and a suitable house in an eligible place, were provided for his accommodation.

* A Shanscreet poem of high celebrity. See Mr. Wilkins's elegant translation.

From the east, from the city of *Oudeherit**, in the empire of Gondala Sirry Taing, comprehending Tartary, all the Nobles and Potentates whereof are dependant on the Sovereignty of China, the sublime Oudeboa, or Emperor, has sent to his Majesty three virtuous daughters†; intercourse and confidence subsist with his kingdom, presents are exchanged, and ambassadors pass between the monarchs. This year, according to custom, the illustrious messengers, Intaloree, Kelloree, and Inloree, arrived at the Golden City with presents and rarities; near to the habitation of these, a house was erected for the members of the English Deputation, neither far distant, nor very close; every thing they stood in need of was provided, and guards were stationed to protect them.

In the Birman year one thousand one hundred and fifty-seven, or year of the He-

* I apprehend Oudeherit to be Jehol, the Tartarian residence of the Emperor of China.

† The King of Ava boasts of having three Chinese ladies, who, his courtiers say, were sent to him by the Emperor of China. Of the truth of this there seems room to doubt.

gira one thousand two hundred and ten, and the sixteenth of the Birman month Too-zalien, or fourteenth of the Mussulman month Suffir, the Chinese Deputies and the Minister from Calcutta, Captain Michael Symes, bearing letters and presents, were attended to the Presence by officers of rank and dignity; and as on the mountain Meru, in the lofty Soudma, the *Deutas* resort to make obeisance to the divine Saggiami, so in the Golden Lotoo, where were seated the Engy Mien, or heir apparent, Meedaw, Lord of Chagaing, the eldest son of the Engy Mien*, Pie Mien, Lord of Prome, Bassein Mien, Lord of Bassein, and all the Royal Family, Ministers and Nobility, the English Gentlemen, together with the Deputies from China, were received with ceremonious attention, and the letters and the presents were there presented. In that splendid assembly they were honourably feasted, and, at the same time, was opened the friendly letter,

* The Prince Royal is called by various titles, Engy Praw, Engy Mien, Engy Tee Kien.

which was read by the Reader of Government, and the contents, expressive of a desire to cement friendship, open a free intercourse, and encourage trade, were explained, and they gave to his Majesty the highest satisfaction. It was likewise mentioned that further particulars would be communicated by Captain Michael Symes, who accordingly addressed a Memorial to his Majesty, at which his Majesty was exceedingly pleased.

Captain Michael Symes, in his Memorial, states, that in the Birmam year one thousand one hundred and fifty-six, and the Mohammedan year one thousand two hundred and nine, certain murderers and robbers of merchants and travellers having fled from Arracan into the district of Chittagong, the troops of this Government, and their leaders, entered the territories of the Company in quest of the offenders; but the English Government, being at that time unacquainted with the circumstances of the case, and uninformed what were the designs of those troops, did not think proper to deliver up the fugitives; and that, after a deliberate

inquiry into the facts alleged against them, and a thorough knowledge of the matter, the criminals were apprehended and delivered up; and that, hereafter, upon application (by letter), delinquents of this description will be surrendered, which will promote the welfare of both countries, and contribute to the satisfaction of their respective Sovereigns.

Captain Symes also desires, that, from the English merchants and traders who come to the ports of this kingdom, only such duties, customs, and charges be exacted as are duly authorized, and established by ancient usage; and that merchants be allowed to carry their merchandize wheresoever they may think proper, and not be molested or prevented by any officer or subject under this Government; and after having disposed of their goods, they may be permitted to purchase, either personally or by agent, the produce of the country; and that no person at Rangoon be suffered to exact from merchants more than what is authorized; and that if the Government of Bengal should think fit hereafter to

appoint a person to reside at Rangoon, on the part of the Company, to superintend mercantile concerns, and forward letters and presents to the Golden Feet, a right of residence be granted to such person; and that merchants or traders who think themselves aggrieved, shall have liberty to prefer their complaints at the Golden Feet, in any manner they may think most eligible; and that English merchants unacquainted with the Birman language be permitted to employ whatever interpreters they choose, in the management of their affairs; and that English ships, when dismasted, and obliged to put into Birman ports by stress of weather, in want of repair and assistance, be aided by the officers of Government, and provided with necessaries to refit at the current prices of the country; and that, on the frontiers of Arracan, on the borders of the river Naaf, a Chokey, or guard-house, and a village be established. Moreover, Captain Michael Symes notifies, that whatever Birman merchants shall resort to English ports, they shall be allowed, on paying the established

duties, to buy and sell, and none shall molest or hinder them, and they shall have liberty to go and come, and barter at their pleasure; and that if any person oppress or act unjustly towards them, the law will take cognizance thereof, and punish the offender; and that if his Birman Majesty shall think fit to send any person to Calcutta or Bengal, or to any other English port, there to reside, for the purpose of superintending mercantile concerns, all representations made by such person to the English Government will be duly attended to, and justice done according to law; and that if any Birman ships put into English ports through stress of weather, dismasted, and in want of repair, every assistance shall be given to such ships, on paying the equitable and accustomed rates; and that the enemies of the Birman nation shall not be assisted by the English with guns and weapons, powder, ball, or warlike stores; and in like manner, that the enemies of the English, as well European as Indian, shall not be aided by the Birmans, with stores, provisions, or timber, in any manner;

and that if his Birman Majesty shall think fit to send any person to ratify these proposals, such person will be received with due regard, and meet with adequate attention.

These desires of Captain Michael Symes, and the contents of his Memorial, the tenor of which has been detailed, were conveyed to the golden ears of the Sovereign of Nobles and Potentates: therefore, seeing that the illustrious Governor-General, the Representative of the King of England, has thus manifested his desire to cement friendship and amity, *I, the King Immortal, whose philanthropy is universal, whose anxiety for the benefit and welfare of all mankind never ceases,*

I DIRECT,

That all merchants of the English nation, who resort to Birman ports, shall pay customs, duties, charges, warehouse hire, searchers, &c. agreeably to former established usage.

English merchants are to be permitted to go to whatever part of the Birman dominions they think proper, either to buy or to sell, and they are on no account to be stopped,

molested, or oppressed; and they shall have liberty to go to whatever town, village, or city they choose, for the purpose of buying, selling, or bartering; and whatsoever articles of the produce of this country they may be desirous of purchasing, they shall be allowed to do so, either in person, or by their agents: and English merchants having been long accustomed to trade to Birman ports without molestation, IT IS COMMANDED, that they continue their trade in future without molestation; and should the English Company think proper to depute a person to reside at Rangoon, to superintend mercantile affairs, maintain a friendly intercourse, and forward letters to the Presence, it is ordered, that such person shall have a right of residence; and should any English merchant be desirous of sending a representation, the officers of Government, in any port, district, and town, shall forward such representation; or if a merchant should be inclined to present in person a petition at the Golden Feet, he shall be allowed to come to the Golden Presence for that purpose:—This

is peremptory.—And as English merchants are unacquainted with the Birman language, they are to be allowed to employ whatever interpreters they think proper; and as, in the stormy season, English ships are often dismasted, and driven into Birman ports by stress of weather, ships in this unfortunate predicament shall be supplied with all necessary wood, workmen, &c. at the current rates of the country; and the arrangement that Captain Michael Symes has in friendship proposed, relative to commercial concerns, for the encouragement of merchants and traders, the Ministers of the Palace have received the Royal Command to signify to the Governors and Killedars of the several ports and districts, that such arrangement is to be observed and carried into effect: and respecting the establishment of a Chokey and village on the frontiers of Arracan, on the banks of the river Naaf, as there is strict and confidential friendship with the King of England, there can in future be no difference or distinction between the countries; and with respect to the desire, that aid should

not be given by this state to the enemies of England, as well European as Indian, and that such enemies should not be assisted at our ports with warlike implements, timber, or provisions, it is to be observed, that, to purchase warlike weapons, lead, and powder, is forbidden to all nations; but when merchants come to trade, they will be allowed to carry away their commodities, agreeably to the usage of merchants. All the requisitions made by Captain Symes respecting customs, timber, searchers, and commercial matters, are notified to Killedars *, Governors, Guards of the Gauts †, and persons in authority, and observance of the orders issued thereupon strictly enjoined. And to Captain Michael Symes has been presented, as a mark of favour, one ruby and one sapphire ring; and to Mr. Wood, and Dr. Buchanan, each, one ruby ring; also to Captain Symes, a precious stone, called *Mobee*, weighing three viss and forty tackall, and a stone of jasper, weighing eight viss, also

* Commanders of forts. † Passes.

two elephant's teeth, weighing thirty-four viss: these have been delivered to the care of Captain Symes. The Queen, likewise, has presented him with a ruby ring of nine stones, a silver box, weighing ninety tackall*, and a silver cup of eleven tackall and three quarters weight; also, another silver box, weighing forty-four tackall, and another cup weighing six tackall, and two silver trays, one weighing sixty-six tackall, the other seventy-seven, and two gilt trays of a different shape, and two large boxes; and from the second Queen, called Myack Nandoh, one ruby ring, and three sapphire rings, and a chest with a lock, and two gilt trays, and three painted cups. These several articles are sent to the illustrious Governor-General, who is entrusted in confidence by the King of England with the administration of India, and who, ever anxious for the welfare and prosperity of his country, encourages and assists Birmans that trade to English ports. In like manner, friendship is

* A tackall weighs a little more than half an ounce.

happily maintained with the Chinese Government, and a constant intercourse is preserved. It will therefore be right that the illustrious Governor-General do acquaint the King of England of the friendship that is, on this occasion, established, and which, it is hoped, will be permanent.

Note.—The following were explained to me as the ten duties incumbent on all kings, which are alluded to in the foregoing letter:—*Dhanaan*, universal beneficence; *Seelaan*, daily prayer; *Owerodaan*, to shew mercy; *Dhasameda*, to exact only a tenth; *Dherma*, justice; *Yamatza*, to punish without anger; *Boumee*, to support mankind as the earth sustains the weight of all creation: *Abeedziet*, to employ prudent commanders; *Mantha*, to listen to counsel; *Deige Kunna*, to avoid pride.

No. IV.

Translation of the Royal Mandate, accompanying the Letter to the Governor General.

' To all Commanders of Garrisons and Governors of Sea Ports, in like Virtue as to the Maywoon of Henzawuddy (Pegue).

THE Source of Greatness and Dignity Celestial, whose threshold is as the firmaments, and whose suppliants, when he places the Golden Foot of Majesty on their fortunate heads, like the blooming lotos, expand with confidence unbounded :—such are the Ministers of exalted rank, the Guardians of the Empire, from among whom the high and transcendant Woongee proclaims these orders.

Governor of Henzawuddy, whose title is Mein, Lla, Noo, Retha; Governor of the Waters, whose title is Raywoon; Collector of the King's revenues, whose title is Ackawoon; Commander of the Troops, whose title is Chekey:

Whereas English merchants resort to the port of Rangoon to carry on trade in friendship, good faith, and confidence in the Royal protection; therefore, when merchants come to the port of Rangoon, duties for Godown (warehouse), *Rabeat* (searchers or appraisers), and other charges, shall be regulated according to the former established rates, and no more, on any pretence, shall be taken.

English merchants, who have paid the port duties, shall be allowed to go to whatever part of the country they think fit, having obtained a certificate and order from the Maywoon, or Governor of the province; and whatever goods English merchants wish to purchase in return, they shall not be impeded, or molested, or prevented in their barter, bargain, or purchase; and if it should be judged expedient to establish any person,

on the part of the English Company* at Rangoon, for the purpose of trade, and to forward letters or presents to the King, to such person a right of residence is granted.

If any English merchant be aggrieved, or think that he suffers oppression, he may complain, either through the Governor of the province, by petition to the Throne, or prefer his complaint in person; and as Englishmen are, for the most part, unacquainted with the Birman tongue, they may employ whatever interpreters they think proper, previously acquainting the King's principal interpreter what person they mean to employ.

English ships driven into Birman ports by stress of weather, and in want of repairs, on due notice of their distress being given to the officers of Government, such vessels shall be expeditiously supplied with workmen, timber, iron, and every requisite; and the work shall be done, and the sup-

* The word Company is omitted in the Persian, but inserted in the original Birman.

plies granted, at the current rates of the country.

As the English have long had commercial connections with the Birman nation, and are desirous of extending it, they are to be allowed to come and depart at their pleasure without hindrance; and seeing that the illustrious Governor of Calcutta in Bengal, on the part of the King of England, has sent tokens of friendship to the Golden Feet; these orders are, therefore, issued for the benefit, welfare, and protection of the English people.

"The original in Birman authenticated by the Great Seal."

No. V.

CAMMUAZA, *or the* CEREMONY *used at the Induction of a Birman into the Order of Priesthood, called* PHONGHI, *or* RHAHAAN.

PREVIOUS to ordination, the Sabiet* and the yellow garment of priesthood shall be delivered to the Candidate; he shall then be enjoined to repeat thrice, with a distinct voice, the following sentence to the *Upizeé*† that presides:

"Venerable Father, I acknowledge you to be my *Upizeé*, my preceptor, and ghostly guide." Having spoken these words, he shall approach the *Cammuazara*, or him who

* A blue lackered box borne by the priests when they perambulate to collect eleemosynary provisions. See Vol. II. p. 118.

† The chief or principal of the monastery.

reads the sacred Cammua, who shall say as follows:

"O Candidate, dost thou acknowledge this to be thy *Sabiet*, and these thy sacred vestments?" To which the Candidate shall audibly answer, "Yea." The Cammuazara shall then command him to recede to the distance of twelve cubits, and, turning towards the audience, shall address them as follows:

"Let this sacred assembly of the professors of our holy religion attend to what I now impart. The Candidate who stands in your presence, humbly, and with due submission, implores of the Upizeê to invest him with our holy function; and as the present time seemeth good for the purpose, and convenient unto this assembly, I will forthwith duly admonish the Candidate.

"O thou who seekest admission into our sacred order, be attentive unto my words, and beware lest on this occasion you utter an untruth, or criminally attempt to conceal aught from our knowledge: learn, that there are certain incapacities and defects, which

render a person unfit to receive the holy induction; moreover, when, in this reverend assembly, you shall be interrogated respecting such defects, you are to answer truly, and declare whatever incapacities you may labour under, of what nature soever they may be, and how they originated; nor ought you to stand silent, or decline your head when you are interrogated, through shame or fear. Now, even at this time, in the presence of this assembly, may any one of the brotherhood interrogate you at his pleasure.

"O Candidate, art thou affected with the leprosy, or any impure disease?" To which the Candidate shall reply, "From such complaints I am free."

"Hast thou the scrofula, St. Anthony's fire, any schirrous affection, cancer, or itch? Hast thou an asthma or oppression of the lungs? Hast thou any hereditary complaint arising from a tainted source of blood? Art thou sprung from dwarfs or giants, or art thou under the influence of sorcerers, evil

genii or the *Natt** of the woods and the mountains?"

"From all these disqualifications I am free."

"O Candidate, art thou a man perfect in thy virility, and all thy members?" "I am perfect."—"Art thou legitimate?" "I am legitimate."—"Art thou the bounden vassal of any lord, or the slave of any man in power?" "I am not." "Art thou free from debt?" "I am."—"Have thy parents granted thee permission, and hast thou attained the complete age of twenty years?" "My parents have consented, and I have attained the age of twenty years."—"Are thy vestments and Sabiet ready?" "They are ready."

"O Candidate, by what appellation wilt thou be known?" "By that of *Naca* (sinner)."—"What is the title of thy Upizeê?" "Assentriit (perfection)."

The Cammuazara shall thus proceed:

* Aerial spirits.

"Reverend Divines, I beseech you attend unto my words. The Candidate humbly entreats of his Upizeê admission into our holy order, and him have I duly admonished. Doth the present appear unto this assembly a meet and proper time that he should come forward?" The Priests reply "Come forward." The Candidate having advanced twelve cubits, shall then say, "Venerable and holy men, I, a lowly suppliant, with humility implore your aid. Oh! if pity dwell within your breasts, snatch me from the walk of death, from the ways of sinners, and place me in the holy habitation, the seat of virtue and divine perfection." This entreaty shall be repeated three times, after which the reader of the Cammua thus proceeds:

"Reverend Fathers here convened, the Candidate in your presence solicits holy orders from the venerable Upizeê. It appears that he is free from all defects, corporeal infirmities, and mental incapacities: he has likewise received the Sabiet, and the sacred vestments, and in the name, and with the sanction of

the venerable Upizeê, entreats induction. Let those who assent to his admission keep silence, but let such as object, and deem the Candidate a person unworthy to be received, speak out and declare their motives in presence of this assembly." These words shall be thrice repeated; and if no person dissent, and all are silent, the reception of the Candidate is determined on; when, relinquishing his state of imperfection, he shall be translated into that of purity, and thenceforward be considered as one of the elect.

The Cammuazara shall then proceed:—"Let the Reverend Fathers present note with precision, under what shade of the foot, what hour, day, and season this ordination has been completed. Let the Candidate attend to the four following duties, which it is incumbent on him to observe; and to the faults hereafter enumerated under four heads, which he must carefully avoid.

"First, a principal duty of our holy function consists in procuring maintenance by perambulation; by laborious and incessant

motion* of the muscles of the legs. You must seek gratuitous sustenance by continual motion; and whatever superfluities you collect, shall be daily bestowed by you on those who are in want. Victuals that are offered to you in particular, given to the society in general, sent with letters desiring your prayers, or presented on the hebdomadal festivals of the increasing and decreasing moon, all such gifts may be accepted and distributed."

To which the Candidate shall reply, "As I am instructed, so will I perform."

The reader of the Cammua thus proceeds:—"Secondly, It is part of the duty of a priest through humility to soil his garments with dust, and wear sepulchral vestments. But should the liberality of good men munificently reward your pious labours, it shall be allowed thee to wear cloth called *choma*: also silk or cotton yellow cloth; yellow woollen cloth; cloth made of the bark of

* See Vol. II. p. 118.

certain trees, or the feathers of certain birds. Such vestments thou mayest use."

To which the Candidate shall reply, "As I am instructed," &c.

The reader of the Cammua continues:—Thou shalt dwell as becometh our order, in houses built beneath the shade of the trees of the forest; in houses built of wood, or of masonry; houses having a pyramidical roof, of a triangular or quadrangular form, adorned with flowers and figures; houses raised on posts, or built on arches. Such dwellings mayest thou inhabit."

Candidate:—"As I am instructed," &c.

The reader of the Cammua:—"Fourthly, Thou shalt turn to use such things as men cast away; and thou shalt search for healing qualities in simples, in which no virtue is supposed to exist. The following articles may be used medicinally; sweet and sour milk, oil, honey, sugar and syrups."

Candidate:—"As I am instructed," &c.

Cammuazara:—"Being now admitted an associate of the virtuous and immaculate,

thou shalt not indulge thyself in any gratification either social or solitary, after the manner of seculars; nor shalt thou frequent the company of laymen, or of women. He who acts thus can no longer be numbered among the elect: sooner shall the severed head be joined again to the neck, and life restored to the breathless body, than a Rhahaan, who committeth fornication, recover his lost purity, and be received again within the sacred pale. Beware, therefore, lest thou pollute thyself with the knowledge of woman.

"Again, It is forbidden thee to steal, or by any unjust means possess thyself of the property of another, even though the amount should not exceed the fourth part of a tackall; for whatsoever Phongi or Rhahaan sinneth even to that small amount, he shall be divested of his sacred character, and be expelled the brotherhood. He who is guilty of such a crime can no more be restored to his pristine state of purity, than the blasted tree can bud anew, and bear fresh

flowers and fruit. Remember, therefore, O Candidate, and through thy mortal journey beware of theft.

"Again, Thou shalt not deprive any animal of life;—such deeds are unlawful and profane. Thou shalt not take away life even from the smallest insect, or the vilest reptile. Sooner shall the cleft rock unite its severed fragments, and become whole, than he who destroys the vital principle in any animal be re-admitted into our sacred institution. Avoid with caution this heinous transgression.

"Again, The holy professors of our religion are strictly forbidden to arrogate to themselves aught on account of the sanctity of their profession, or pretend to be endowed with any supernatural gift or power, such as *Meipo*, or endeavour to obtain the offering usually given to persons so endowed. Whosoever is actuated by such culpable pride shall fall like the lofty mountain palm beneath the stroke of the wood-cutter. Through life, there-

fore, O my brother, observe these precepts, and act as thou art now commanded."

To which the Candidate shall with humility reply, "As I am instructed, so will I perform."—He shall then withdraw.

GLOSSARY.

AMBENDOZAAN..a Birman Lawyer.
Assay-woon.......Paymaster-General.
Atta-woon ....a Privy Counsellor.

Boomien ....a General.

Carianer........a Pastoral Race of People.
Chaingee-woon....Master of the Elephants.
Chekey ....a Lieutenant.
Chob-wa ....a Tributary Prince.
Colar ....a Stranger, Foreigner.

Day-woon ....Armour-bearer to the King.

Engy Teekien ....the Prince Royal.

Gaudma ....the Name of the Birman Idol.

Gnapee.........a Species of Sprat which the Birmans pickle.

Henza..........a Goose, the Symbol of the Birman Nation.

Kayn...........a Race of Mountaineers.

Kioum..........a Monastery, or Residence of Rhahaans or Priests.

Kioup..........a Small River.

Leedegee........Chief or Steersman of a Boat.

Lotoo...........the Hall where the Grand Council of the Nation assemble.

Manchegee......the Birman Name for the Province of Yunan in China.

Maywoon.......Viceroy of a Province.

Mioup..........a River.

Miou...........a City, a Town, a District.

Miou Gee.......Chief of a District or Town.

Moonshee........a Mussulman Professor of Letters.

Nakhaan.......a Register.

Phonghi........an inferior Order of Priesthood.

Piasath.........the regal Spire that distinguishes the Dwelling of the Monarch, and the Temples of the Divinity.

Pillaw ....an Indian Dish, esteemed a great delicacy.
Praw ....a Temple, a Lord, also a title given by an Inferior to a Superior.
Pundit ....a Learned Hindoo.
Pymon..........a Banker, an Assayer of Metal.

Raywoon........an Officer of Distinction, Governor of a Town.
Rhahaan........a Priest.
Rhoom..........a Public Hall, the Court of Justice.
Rua ....a Village.

Sandohgaan .....Master of the Ceremonies.
Sandozien ....an Officer whose business is to read public documents.
Seree Dogee......a Principal Secretary.
Seree Miou ......a Provincial Secretary.
Seree...........a Clerk.
Shawbunder .....an Intendant of the Port.
Siredaw ....High Priest.

Tackall.........a Piece of Silver of about 2s. 6d. value.
Talien..........a Native of Pegue.
Tallepoin ....a Preceptor, a name by which the Rhahaans or Priests were known to Europeans.
Tee ....the Umbrella of a Pagoda, or Temple of Worship.
Teekien ....a Prince.

Teelee ....a War-boat.

Terrezogee ......an Officer of an inferior dignity.

Tsaloe ....the distinguishing chain of Nobility.

Woongee ....First Counsellor of State.

Woondeck ....Second Counsellor of State.

THE END.

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